THE

SPIRIT OF THE ELBE:

A ROMANCE.

WOHER DIESE TÖNE?—DIESE GESTALT?
MEIN EIGNER BRUDER

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

DUBLIN:

PRINTED BY W. PORTER, CRAFTON-STREET.

1800.

BRITISH MUSEUM
15
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APR

TO

MISS GUNNING.

MADAM,

WITHOUT having requeſted your permiſſion, I inſcribe theſe Volumes to you. I would not hazard to the chance of a refuſal the pleaſure of ſeeing my little Work appear under the ſanction of a name, whoſe higheſt excellence I held in mine eye while I contemplated the chief moral of my ſtory.

That Heaven is the proper champion of the injured, is what I would inculcate: and could I have transfuſed the ſoul of my friend into the boſom of my hero, the eloquent virtues of her

heart would have ſtamped my Volumes with a value which can never be attained by a mere copy from even the brighteſt original.

I am,

DEAR MADAM,

With the trueſt reſpect

Your ſincere friend,

THE AUTHOR.

LONDON,
January 1799.

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THE

SPIRIT OF THE ELBE.

CHAP. I.

" *Ivi ſenza ripoſo i giorni mena,*
" *Senza ſonno le notti: ivi ti duoli*
" *Non men di dubbia che di certa peña.*"

GIOVANNI DELLA CASA.

There ſhall thy heavy moments creep,
An anxious care ſhall murder ſleep,
Or paint, in dreams of woe,
Sad viſionary fears, that ſweep
Thine eyes, that will ſo deeply weep,
A tale ye yet ſhall know.

THE rain beat in torrents againſt the ſides of the carriage which conveyed Roſamund to the Caſtle of her aunt. Long and fatiguing had been her journey from Hungary to Saxony. Wrapped in her pellice, that ſhe might be entirely ſcreened from the raging of the ſtorm, her thoughts fell back on herſelf. She dwelt with fond regret on Preſburg, on the convent

of St. Thereſa; and ruminated, with an anxious heart, on her aunt Ulrica, and the Count ſhe had married.

The Counteſs Blackenberg, to whom Roſamund now was going, had ſcarcely been wedded two months, when, remembering that her orphan niece poſſeſſed no other relation than herſelf, and one more aunt, who had long ago accompanied her lord to England, ſhe formed the reſolution of ſending for her from the convent in which ſhe had been brought up, to aſſiſt her in doing the honours of her caſtle.

Roſamund, almoſt exhauſted with fatigue; and chilled by the damp and bleakneſs of the weather, with pleaſure heard the heavy wheels of her vehicle enter upon the platform of a drawbridge: ſhe liſtened with ſenſations of comfort, to the hollow ſound of its beams, and the clanking of its chains, as they ſlowly rumbled over it. At the outer gate ſhe was met by the porter, who aſſiſting her to alight from the carriage, ſupported her into the caſtle. He opened a pair of large folding doors, which ſpread into a magnificent chamber; and ſaid, "As all the men were abroad, and the women

men goſſiping, he would go himſelf to ſeek the houſe-keeper, who ſhould attend her immediately." He cloſed the doors after him as he withdrew; when Roſamund, ſhivering with cold, and ſick at heart for want of refreſhment, tottering to a ſeat, drew it near to a fire that ſeemed almoſt extinguiſhed. She ſtirred the dying embers; and looking round the room, whoſe extent now was ſeen obſcurely through the dim twilight of a dark autumnal evening, ſhe gazed on the magnificence of the chamber, the Perſian tapeſtry on the floor, and the regal grandeur of the draperies of purple and gold, which ſwept it on all ſides. She then turned to the beating tempeſt againſt the windows, then to the miſerable fire before her, and ſighed to think how far are the feelings of ſplendour from thoſe of comfort.

Roſamund had waited two hours in this cheerleſs chamber, when no houſe-keeper appeared: darkneſs came quickly on, and her fire went quite out. Oppreſſed in her ſpirits, and cold, ſhe gave one deſponding look to the inhoſpitable hearth ſhe left; and then approaching to ſee if ſhe could perceive any perſon in the garden, for ſhe had already rang

rang the bell repeatedly, ſhe advanced to the window, and attempted to look through, but the thickneſs of the paintings upon the glaſs totally prevented the ſight. She opened the caſement to aſſiſt her view; but ſhe beheld no garden, only the rapid torrent of the Elbe, which ruſhed by the buttreſſes, ſwoln and foaming with the ſtorm. The rain beat in her face; and a ſudden ſurge from the river covered her from head to foot with its brine.

This laſt accident bereaved her of all her fortitude. She tried to cloſe the window again; but a yelling guſt of wind tore it from her hand; and ſhe threw herſelf into a ſeat, weeping and miſerable. Trembling beneath the cold of her wet cloaths, liſtening to the roaring of the Elbe, and the flapping of the open window which admitted every blaſt, her tears poured into her boſom; and ſhe vainly wiſhed to be again encircled in the ſhelter of her little cell.

She had ſat nearly another hour in this ſituation, and was already involved in total darkneſs, when her attention was arouſed by a loud uproar of horns ſounding, horſes feet clattering,

ing, carriage-wheels rattling, and a mixed multitude of human voices calling, in all directions, from the interior of the caſtle. In ten minutes after, her door opened, and the Counteſs entered, followed by ſeveral attendants bearing lights. Roſamund attempted to riſe, to meet her aunt; but, faint with her fatigue and anxiety, ſhe dropt back into her chair. The Counteſs approached her, kiſſed her, and taking her by the hand, ſaid ſhe would lead her into a warmer room. Leaning upon her aunt, ſhe left the apartment, croſſed the grand hall, and entered with her into a room ſtill more ſumptuous than the former, in which ſat the Count, by the ſide of a large blazing fire, and ſurrounded by a profuſe aſſemblage of refreſhments. He advanced to Roſamund, and received her with a haughty humility. The heart of the diſconſolate girl ſunk ſtill ſicker at this reception. He deſired the Counteſs to pour him out a goblet of tockay; and, commanding a ſervant to bring his night-gown, was preparing to pull off his cloak, when the wet dreſs of Roſamund caught his eye. He deigned to take notice of it, and adviſed her to retire to bed. Roſamund was glad to hear the propoſal; and, bowing

bowing her aching head to both of them, immediately accompanied one of her aunt's women.

They aſcended a flight of ſtairs, which carried them to a gallery, that appeared to wind round the whole of the weſtern ſide of the caſtle: they then entered upon a corridor, which ſurrounded a more circumſcribed hall than the one ſhe before had ſeen; and entering another gallery, proceeded, with the attendant, to its very extremity. The woman threw open a large heavy door, on which Roſamund found herſelf in the midſt of a ſpacious room, whoſe carved cedar ſides, rendered totally black by the breath of near ſeven centuries, gave a drearineſs to the wide extent of the apartment, that in her mind might well anſwer to the chilling welcome of her hoſt. However, a fire, which a ſervant began to light, in ſome meaſure diſpelled the ſurrounding gloom. The Counteſs ſent her ſome mulled wine, which ſhe haſtily ſwallowed; then, diſmiſſing the attendants, ſhe made haſte to throw off her dripping clothes, and put on her ſleeping garments. She approached her canopy-teſtered bed, whoſe long velvet curtains ſwept in large maſſes

maſſes on the floor; and haſtily flinging down the ſheets, ſhe gazed fearfully around, then ſuddenly, panic-ſtruck, jumped into the bed, and buried herſelf in the clothes. The hurry of her ſpirits ſoon ſubſided: ſhe ſmiled at her fooliſh terrors; and recommending herſelf to the care of Heaven, ſunk into a profound ſlumber.

CHAP. II.

" ——— *Deſinant*
" *Maledicere, malefacta ne noſcant ſua.*" TER.

" Let them ceaſe to ſpeak ill of others, leſt they hear of their own miſdeeds."

THE ſleep of Roſamund had been deep, but not renovating; and ſhe aroſe the next morning languid and unrefreſhed. Dejected at the recollection of her ſtrange inhoſpitable reception, ſhe cheerleſsly put on her clothes, and opening her chamber-door, purſued her way through the galleries, in hopes of meeting ſome of the domeſtics, or perhaps the Counteſs herſelf. For near a quarter of an hour ſhe ſought in vain for the ſtaircaſe by which

ſhe

ſhe had aſcended. Finding herſelf at laſt bewildered in a vaſt maze of magnificent bedrooms, ſhe perceived a flight of winding ſtone ſtairs, which ſhe immediately determined to deſcend. They brought her out, juſt under the portcullis in the inner gateway. She looked forward, and ſeeing that the morning was tolerably fine, ſhe told the porter, if the Counteſs ſhould riſe, and inquire for her before ſhe returned, to ſay that ſhe was gone to be refreſhed by a little air.

Once more croſſing the drawbridge, ſhe ſtruck off to the weſt; and ſlowly walking up a gentle aſcent, purſued her way for half an hour; when, wearied by the wind, which had very much diſordered her dreſs, ſhe flung herſelf down upon a heap of ſtones to reſt. Turning her head, her eye caught a full view of the Caſtle, which aſtoniſhed her by its extent, and awed her by its magnificence. It ſtood upon a hard rocky ſcite of tremendous ſtrength: three ſides of it were defended by a moat of ſuch depth, that its bottom was loſt in the deep ſhadow of the turrets which covered the towers, and rendered the pondreous battlements yet more dreadful. The eaſtern wing

was

was guarded by the river Elbe, which daſhed its black waves againſt the huge buttreſſes, and then fell back, foaming and bellowing like a ſea. Between Roſamund and the weſtern moat, lay a ſweet valley, beautifully ſmiling with corn-fields on the left; and on the right, extended the Count's domains; in which the velvet-covered lawns, and the magical variety of the aſſembled trees, beneath whoſe foliage the deer browſed, and ſhook with giddy wantonneſs the withered leaves, as they fall in ſhowers upon their heads; produced a ſcene, whoſe gentle beauties but ill accorded with the rugged aſpect of the Caſtle. Behind this lovely valley, roſe ſome high hills, wooded and green; and covering them again, and ſkirting off to the ſouth, the ſtupendous mountains of Bohemia hemmed in the proſpect.

Roſamund gazed on theſe black and naked rocks, whoſe ſombre heads ſeemed to aſſume a thouſand terrific forms, piled one above the other, till their ſummits were loſt in the gathering clouds. She watched the condenſed vapour, as it broke upon their brows, and was blown, by the ſtrong ſtream of air, far to the ſouth. Her eyes dwelt on the ſcene, till they

were dimmed by the thronging tears which rolled over her cheek, and fell upon her arm. "O, Hungary! O, my country!" exclaimed ſhe in a voice of deſolation, "ſhall I ever behold thee more? ſhall I ever again ſit under the vines of St. Thereſa, and mark the clouds as they burſt over the dear Carpathian hills? Thoſe were days of peace and liberty: yes, even in a cloiſter, I enjoyed the trueſt liberty; for I was then independent. There I had no fear, but the fear of offending Heaven. In that tranquil houſe there was no eye that would ſcowl on me; no lordly maſter to look me into inſignificance. Almoſt conſecrated to God, I felt a veſtal's peace, as I cheriſhed a veſtal's purity. And there ye reſt, my father! my mother! Have I for the laſt time wept over your tomb? Alas! how many leagues am I now ſeparated from thoſe dear remains; how many, many leagues, from every comfort. from every heart that loves me!" Her ſobs ſtopped her utterance; and ſhe ſat upon the heap of ſtones, bewailing her orphan ſtate and dependent ſituation, unmindful of the thickening ſky. At laſt, feeling a ſmall rain beginning to fall, ſhe gathered her mantle about her, and haſtened back to the Caſtle.

She

She was met in the breakfaſt parlour by an old woman, who buſily aſſiſted the male attendants to ſpread the table with fruits and preſerves. The men withdrew, and the dame proceeded to finiſh the buſineſs. Roſamund threw herſelf into a ſeat near the fire. "Are you cold, my Lady?" inquired the old woman, ſtirring it. "I fear you have caught an illneſs by your laſt night's wetting. I was ſorely grieved that Wolfius could not find me, for Madame had lain down to ſleep."—"I thank you," replied Roſamund: "I believe the being ſo long expoſed to the damp of the evening has chilled me; or elſe your climate in Saxony is very different from that of Hungary." She ſighed as ſhe ſpoke; and riſing from her chair, almoſt unconſcious of what ſhe was doing, walked about the room, and pored intently into each painting, though ſo abſorbed in her own thoughts, that ſhe actually ſaw none. As ſhe ſtopped before the portrait of a very gorgeouſly dreſſed female, and ſtood before it in a fixed gaze, without knowing on what ſhe looked—"Aye," ſaid the old woman, coming up to her and ſtanding by her ſide: "was ſhe not a ſweet Lady?" Roſamund ſtarted. "Who?"—"Why, my Lady Blackenberg; there ſhe

ſtands: ſhe was our lady in the time of her firſt huſband, Count Koningſtein, the princely lord of this grand Caſtle; but he is dead, and ſhe is dead, and their dear children are dead, and ſtrangers have got it now." The tears rolled over the good woman's cheeks. "What!" ſaid Roſamund, her attention now arouſed, and looking on the picture, "was Count Blackenberg married before? and are theſe lands not rightfully his domains?"—"Oh, yes, they are his, rightful enough," replied ſhe, ſhaking her withered head: "there is nobody here to ſay it is wrong. He was not born to them; but all the young lords are gone long ago. Count Xavier was a ſweet youth: he was drowned fourteen years paſt, and ſo was the dear baby his little brother; he fell out of the window; aye, the very window of your Ladyſhip's bed-room, for it was his chamber: yes, he fell out, and he too was drowned!" Here the poor woman's recollected ſorrows prevented her proceeding; and covering her face with the corner of her apron, ſhe ſobbed violently. "My worthy creature," ſaid Roſamund, "do not thus diſtreſs yourſelf. How ſorry am I that my impertinent curioſity has coſt you ſo much pain!"—"O, my

my ſweet young Lady, I am never ſo happy as when I am talking of, and grieving after, my dear Lady and her beautiful children. Often have I held that lovely boy in my arms: yes, my Lady, had you ever ſeen Count Sigiſmund, you would cry as I do: I am ſure, many ſalt tears Madame Stahl and I pour into the watry grave of our dear young Lords." "Madame Stahl! who is ſhe?" inquired Roſamund. "The houſekeeper of the Caſtle," replied ſhe. "I have ſerved her, as her own woman, this many a year." At that moment a ſervant called Jagellon; and the poor old dame, haſtily drying her eyes, made a profound curtſey to Roſamund, and left her.

Roſamund again turned to the picture. It was the portrait of a beautiful young female: her ſmall and delicate perſon was habited in a moſt ſumptuous robe; and her fine flaxen treſſes were profuſely loaded with jewels, which even crowded upon her forehead, and obſcured her fair languiſhing blue eyes. "And ſhe is *dead!*" ſighed Roſamund: "that roſy cheek is faded, and thoſe pathetic eyes cloſed for ever!" She was loſt in the idea. "Thou waſt, when this picture was taken, warm and

feeling as I am; now thou art cold, inſenſible, and duſt! Thoſe fine features have vaniſhed, never more to be ſeen. And is the only memento of ſuch a woman this poor piece of canvas? Any hand may deſtroy it, and then ſhe is forgotten for ever! O, what are we?—warm, with a quick ſenſe of life beating in every vein; we are lighted into exiſtence one inſtant, that we may be extinguiſhed the next; we are ſnatched from a cheering and luminous world, to be buried in the cold and dark circumference of the grave." Roſamund ſhuddered. "How ſoon may it be my fate! how ſoon may I periſh, before it is hardly known that I have exiſted!" Chilled with an unaccountable horror, ſhe ſtood gazing at the portrait. Turning her eyes haſtily from it, ſhe caſt them upon the ſky. "And thou too art dead, my mother! thou art in Heaven!" Tears burſt from her uplifted eyelids. "And *you* are in Heaven, lovely Counteſs!" exclaimed ſhe, looking on the picture.—"Wretch that I was, to forget the exaltation of the ſoul when I mourned the debaſement of the body! Oh, how do the hopes of religion cheer the proſpect of death! Where are now its horrors?—all annihilat[illegible]. This ſudden

den flaſh of truth has again brought my amazed ſenſes to their proper feeling."

The good woman's ſtory had diſordered her; and in lamenting the extinction of beauty like the Counteſs's, ſhe forgot that the terreſtrial veil muſt be dropped, ere we can array ourſelves in immortality. She now contemplated the portrait with compoſed, though with pitying feelings; wondering, whether ſhe had witneſſed the expiring of her children, or had eſcaped that torture by her own death.

In theſe meditations ſhe was interrupted by the entrance of the Count, who was immediately followed by the Counteſs. They both kiſſed her; and the Count, ſeating her cloſe to the fire, took his chair nearly oppoſite to her, and preſſed her to follow his example, by taking a hearty breakfaſt. It would have been hardly poſſible for her to obey him: he ate of every diſh on the table—ham, fawn, fowls, &c. &c. till Roſamund really dropped her coffee in aſtoniſhment at looking on him. He drank as plentifully as he eat, and had finiſhed two bottles of Moſelle before he roſe from table. His converſation, during breakfaſt,

faſt, conſiſted of entreaties to Roſamund not to ſtarve herſelf; and in rehearſing to the Counteſs the contents of a packet, which he had received that morning, by expreſs, from the Duke of Deux-Ponts. He told her he muſt be at Wittenburgh immediately, for the King of Poland commanded his ſuccour, as his Pruſſian Majeſty had once more invaded Saxony, and threatened to ſtrip the King of the electorate. He had ſcarcely finiſhed his invectives againſt the King of England, for ſubſidizing Pruſſia, when a ſervant entered to inform him, that his equipage was in waiting. The Count bowed to them both; ſaid he would be away only a few days, and left the room.

The Counteſs ſat ſilent, as ſhe had done almoſt the whole of the meal; and Roſamund liſtened, with a ſenſation very like gladneſs, to the gates of the Caſtle, when they cloſed after the retinue. As the laſt great bolt was ſhot into its guard by Wolfius, the Counteſs turned quickly upon her niece. "Well, my dear Roſamund, it is a long time ſince I ſaw you—how prodigiouſly you are grown—Upon my word, much like your mother—poor dear ſilly ſoul! Do not colour ſo, my dear; the

the folly of your parents reflects no diſgrace on you."—"Madam," interrupted Roſamund, her full heart ſtrongly heaving the lawn which concealed her boſom—"Madam, I do not colour, becauſe I fear diſgrace from my parents, but becauſe I hear the ſiſter of my mother traduce her memory."—"Pugh, child, how you talk!" replied the Counteſs in ſome confuſion. "What have I ſaid?—Only, that your mother was very ſilly; and ſo ſhe was, to fling herſelf away upon an Engliſh fortune-hunter!" Roſamund roſe from her chair. "Sit down, my dear, and let me explain myſelf."—"No, Madam!" cried Roſamund, breaking from her claſping hand, "you cannot explain to me any reaſon, but what muſt either offend or afflict me, for diſhonouring the name of my father with ſuch an epithet."—"Well, this is ſo ridiculous!" ſaid the Counteſs, laughing; "how can you pretend to all this regard for the characters of your parents, when you hardly remember to have ſeen them? This comes of ſending girls to be educated by fools! I ſuppoſe, the *bleſſed* Abbeſs, who brought you up, poiſoned your mind with this nonſenſe."—"Yes, Madam, ſhe led me to the grave of my parents; and

and there, while ſhe drew tears from my eyes in pity to their ſufferings, ſhe taught me to love them, and to emulate their virtues. The Abbeſs of St. Thereſa has been both father and mother to me, and God will bleſs her for it." A tear ruſhed into her eye, which ſhe haſtily wiped off with her hand. "Well, Roſamund," commenced her aunt, "I forgive all theſe little airs: I know the romantic creed of the nunneries; you muſt canoniſe every body that is buried within their walls; but when you know more of the world, you will laugh with me at the idea of a young woman of high Hungarian blood flinging herſelf into the arms of an untitled Engliſhman. Your father, my dear, was only a ſubaltern officer in the Britiſh army: he had been ſeveral years in Germany, and was ſerving in favour of our Empreſs-Queen, when my fooliſh ſiſter married him; he was afterwards killed at Dettingen, and from thence removed, by your mad-brained mother, to Hungary; where it was lucky ſhe died, as my father had never given her rogue of a huſband a ſingle ducat in dowry, and reſolved to be equally offended with the widow as the wife."—"I cannot liſten to this," interrupted Roſamund. "Have you no feeling,

ing, that you thus can abuſe the beings who gave me life. I know their ſtory well; but O, how different from yours!"—"Well, we will not quarrel about the dead," ſaid the Counteſs; "and ſo a truce to the ſubject. Have you been over the caſtle?"—"No, Madam," replied Roſamund with haughty coldneſs; I am not fond of inſpecting large rooms and gaudy furniture."—"I think you reſemble your mother as much in temper as in perſon," ſaid the Counteſs reſentfully; and, riſing from her ſeat, ſhe left the apartment.

Roſamund ſighed, as her aunt cloſed the door.—"And is it with you that I am to waſte my life?—Cruel woman! thus to inſult a friendleſs creature, wholly dependant on her bounty and affection!—Would *you* have acted thus?" cried ſhe, turning her complaining eyes upon the picture of the late Counteſs.—"O! no, that ſweet form muſt have encloſed as ſweet a ſpirit!"

She had ſat nearly an hour alone; when wearied with her ſituation, and ſuppoſing that the Counteſs was too much offended to return to her; with an uncomfortable heart, ſhe roſe

off

off her chair, and aſcended the grand ſtairs, with a deſign of bringing down a book, from her own little collection: her mind was agitated, and ſhe wiſhed to ſooth it by reading. "Ah!" thought ſhe to herſelf, "I have here no friend with whom I can converſe! The amiable ſiſters of St. Thereſa are in Hungary, and I am at Koningſtein; hundreds are the miles which divide us! All my ſociety now muſt be with books; they muſt be my companions, my friends, my comforters!" She entered her chamber, and drawing a volume of Kepler from her eſcrutoire, began to read: ſhe began, but ſhe could not proceed; for ſhe had ſeated herſelf at the eaſtern window of her room; the meaſured ſound of the Elbe, daſhing its paſſing waves againſt the buttreſs, reminded her, that this was the window from which the hapleſs little Sigiſmund had fallen. Her thoughts once more became confuſed. Dropping the page of philoſophy from her hand, ſhe reclined her bewildered head upon her arm, and again was loſt in the maze of her aſtoniſhed thoughts.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

" *Spenta è del cielo ogni benigna lampa,*
" *Signoreggiano in lui crudeli ſtelle,*
" *Onde piove virtù che informa e ſtampa*
" *L' aria d' impreſſion maligne e felle.*" TASSO.

Each lamp benign, extinguiſh'd in the ſkies,
I ſee malignant ſtars exulting riſe;
A demon's hand each baleful orb ſuſpends,
While death upon the world below, deſcends.

THE noon wore away, and the loud bell of the Caſtle rang for dinner, before ſhe was awakened from her trance. She roſe heavily from her chair; and looking once more out of the window—" Ah! happy brothers!" ſighed ſhe, " ye have, at leaſt, eſcaped the fate of being dependant orphans!"—The bell again ſounded, and ſhe turned down ſtairs to join her aunt; but when ſhe entered the eating-hall, ſhe was ſurprized at ſeeing only one cover laid, though the tables appeared actually ſinking under the weight of the dinner. She aſked for the Counteſs: One of the ſervants told her, that his lady was gone to dine with the Margravine of Miſnia, and it would be impoſſible for her ladyſhip to return from Miſſein-Caſtle before the next morning.

Roſamund once more gave a ſigh to the ſiſters of St. Thereſa, and their ſocial refectory, as ſhe ſat down to her ſolitary meal.—Her heart was too full to ſuffer her to eat; and overcome by the gaze of ſo many domeſtics, ſhe had ſcarcely been ſeated five minutes before ſhe haſtily roſe, and telling them to remove the dinner, for ſhe had finiſhed, once more returned to her own room, where ſhe ſeated herſelf at the window. The ſun was gliding with his reflected beams the high eaſtern points of the Bohemian hills, whoſe duſky ſummits were almoſt blended with the clouds. Roſamund leaned her head upon her hand, and looked with a tranquillized penſiveneſs upon the magnificent ſcene before her. "O Nature!" exclaimed ſhe, "how doſt thou oppreſs the hearts of thy children! By mine own ſoul, by the grand ſpectacle of the univerſe, thou findeſt means to weigh upon the breaſt. O, why is it, that the ſight of beauty, that a conſciouſneſs to feeling, burthens my heart with this melancholy, while it tranſports me to the ſkies? Am I conſtitutionally unhappy?" A loud ſigh, as if in reply to this half uttered queſtion, made her haſtily turn round. She inſtantly roſe, for atall elegant woman advanced

ed to her. Roſamund bluſhed and looked down, at the ſuppoſition that this ſtranger had hearkened to her mental rhapſody. The lady came forward, and taking her hand, "My dear young Lady, perhaps I ought to make an apology for this intruſion? And perhaps, much more, for thus immediately accoſting you with a ſalutation ſo familiar? But, I have long been unuſed to the converſation of the heart; and when I heard you, forgetting the difference of our ranks, I thus flew to accoſt a mind, that to me appeared ſo lovely." The ready tears burſt from the eyes of Roſamund: "O Madam!" replied ſhe, as ſhe preſſed the hand ſhe held between hers; "O Madam! if you knew the comfort that you have ſpoken to my poor diſconſolate ſpirit, you would expect my thanks, not ſeek to make your apology!—But tell me, who is it that I have the honour of ſpeaking to? Are you a reſident in this caſtle?"—"I am," replied the Lady, while a deep ſcarlet ſuffuſed her before pale cheek: "I am the houſekeeper of the Caſtle." "What?" exclaimed Roſamund, "are you Madame Stahl?"—"I am," rejoined ſhe, "and have lived here for theſe fourteen years. My good Jagellon told me of the conference

which ſhe held with you this morning; and, deeply intereſted by the pity which you expreſſed for the hapleſs children of Count Koningſtein, I haſtened here, as early as the buſineſs of the day would allow me; for long, very long, is it ſince I have ſpoken with any being who had a ſoul to compaſſionate the ſorrows which ever will wring my heart!" Madame Stahl turned from Roſamund to hide her emotions; and Roſamund, petrified with ſurprize at ſuch a form, with ſuch demeanour, in a ſervant, ſtood and gazed on her in mute aſtoniſhment.

The houſekeeper again turned round, and ſmiling in her tears, "Forgive me, Madam, this agitation? When you know more of the hiſtory of thoſe dear beings, who once inhabitated this room, you will indeed wonder that I live to tell it." She now reſted againſt the caſement of the window, and looked long and wildly into the river.—"Thoſe are the very waves," added ſhe, the tears crowding into her eyes, "that immerged him for ever!" Roſamund caught her hand; and dropped it again. "Lovely Roſamund!" exclaimed ſhe, turning to her, "had you known him; ſo like

like his father! O! ſo like him, that they would not let him live!" Madame Stahl fell back on a ſeat; a cold ſhivering ſeized her auditor, as ſhe ſunk down beſide her. Madame Stahl covered her face with her hands, and Roſamund, with her eyes firmly fixed upon the agitated form before her, ſat in mute horror and amaze. She feared that the poor little Sigiſmund had been murdered; and ſhe dreaded to give, perhaps renewed, grief to Madame Stahl, by aſking the queſtion.

She had ſat nearly ten minutes in this painful ſilence, when Madame Stahl raiſing her head from her hands, which were wet with the tears that yet ſtreamed down her cheeks, ſhe tried to ſpeak, but ſhe could not articulate; the words died upon her lips; and caſting a look of undiſcribable ſorrow upon the wondering girl, ſhe again threw her head upon the ſofa, preſſing her hand to her boſom, as if her heart was burſting. Roſamund alarmed, and deeply affected, threw herſelf down beſide her, and raiſing her head, laid it upon her own boſom, whilſt ſhe conjured her to be comforted. "I am aſhamed of my violence! But dear lady," cried the houſekeeper, in a voice

hardly to be heard, " though fourteen years have paſt ſince all theſe horrors were tranſacted, yet, until this moment, I never ſaw the ſpot in which my dear Sgiſmund periſhed! O! how ſedulouſly have I avoided this fatal apartment!"—" Good God!" exclaimed Roſamund, " how came I to ſleep here?"—It was by the Count's orders," replied ſhe. " After the death of my young lords, he quickly left the Caſtle; and until his late marriage with your aunt, he never reviſited it. And, for why I know not, but it was by his orders that you ſhould ſleep here."—" But did he know any thing of the murder of Lord Sigiſmund?" inquired Roſamund. " Did he? O righteous Heaven!" exclaimed Madame Stahl, in a voice of determined horror; and haſtily riſing from her ſeat, ſhe paced the room with a diſordered ſtep; then ſuddenly ſtopping, ſaid, " My dear young Lady, come to my room this evening? I will ſend Jagellon to conduct you, when all the ſervants are at reſt. I will then tell you the hiſtory of this houſe, and of myſelf." She turned out of the room, leaving Roſamund ready to ſuffocate with the various emotions and conjectures which ruſhed into her mind. She ſtill ſtood looking

looking on the door at which the intereſting Madame Stahl had departed; and ſhe liſtened to her ſobs in the paſſage, till the winding of the gallery prevented the ſound from reaching her. Her thoughts formed many ſuppoſitions of the events the houſekeeper was to relate; but how a woman of her figure and mein could be reduced to the level of a ſervant, aſtoniſhed and raiſed her curioſity!

In theſe anticipations ſhe paſſed the time, till the duſk ſpreading itſelf over the chamber in which ſhe was ſeated, and the chill air entering in at the window, reminded her of the lateneſs of the hour; when riſing from her chair, ſhe went down ſtairs and entered the crimſon-ſaloon. Candles were brought in; and ſhe ſat down to amuſe her anxiety, till the period of joining Madame Stahl approached. She threw around her eyes to ſearch if ſhe could ſee any book, which the Count or Counteſs might have left on the tables; but ſhe looked in vain: till perceiving the key of a door diſcoverable behind the folds of one of the many canopies which draperied the room; ſhe took a candle, and putting aſide the curtain turned the lock, which yielded to her hand: immediately

immediately ſhe found herſelf in an immenſe library. There was a damp and muſty ſmell in the place, as if it was little frequented and never uſed. However, ſhe walked in, and approaching one of the large ſhelves, drew out a volume, which by its ſize and magnificence of the binding, attracted her notice. It was a fine Engliſh edition of Shakeſpeare.—She took it in her hand, and opened it at the play of Hamlet. At the deſire of her mother, ſhe had been taught Engliſh; and having heard of the works of this tranſcendant Poet, ſhe now greedily graſped at the opportunity of reading him; and haſtened with the volume back to her ſeat.

She ſat down, and opening it again, again it opened at the play of Hamlet. Her eye caught theſe lines, under which a pencil had been drawn, and around which the page appeared bliſtered and ſtained, as if by tears:

" ——— Now to my mother—
" O, heart, loſe not thy nature; let not ever
" The ſoul of Nero enter this firm boſom!"

She was aſtoniſhed;—and induced to look ſtill further into the play, in another ſcene, again were marked,

" ——— The

"———The funeral bak'd meats
" Did coldly furniſh forth the marriage tables.
" Would I had met my deareſt foe in heaven,
" Or ever had I ſeen that day!"

And again, at the end of the play was written in Engliſh, and in a wild perturbed hand—

" Good night, indeed, ſweet prince!"
I would thy night were mine!——

A great deal more had been written, but it was ſo daſhed and ſcrawled out, that it was perfectly obliterated. Roſamund viewed theſe few myſterious words, and the preceding marked lines, with wonder, and a deſire to read the reſt of the play; ſhe began it. Her whole attention being engaged in the ſtory, ſhe proceeded as far as the cloſet-ſcene; and arrived at the following words, which were daſhed with ink under every letter,

" ——— Rebellious hell,
" If thou canſt mutiny in a matron's bones,
" To flaming youth, let virtue be as wax,
" And melt in her own fire; proclaim no ſhame,
" When the compulſive ardour gives the charge;
" Since froſt itſelf as actively doth burn,
" And reaſon pandars will!"——

" What can this mean?" ſaid ſhe to herſelf. " Who can have marked theſe lines? Not

Not the Count?—There ſeems to be more in it than a mere aſſent to their beauty!" Again ſhe turned over the many pages which were wrinkled, as if by the frequent dropping of tears; and again ſhe was returning to the ſcene, when the door opened, and Madame Stahl appeared. She beckoned her in ſilence, and Roſamund, riſing mechanically, followed her into her chamber, with the open book ſtill in her hand.

Madame Stahl cloſed the door gently; then ſetting a chair cloſe by the window, (for the moon had now riſen and ſhown full into the room,) ſhe ſeated Roſamund, and placing her candle on a table at the other ſide of the apartment, ſat down nearly oppoſite to her auditor. They were both ſilent. It was the pauſe of two full and oppreſſed hearts. Roſamund felt her ſoul big with doubts, anxieties, and expectation: and the breaſt of the houſekeeper heaved with the weight of long-paſſed, but ever-heavy ſorrows. Roſamund wiſhed to rouſe her: "I have found a ſtrange book: will you tell me who marked theſe lines?" As ſhe ſpoke, ſhe laid the volume upon the knee of Madame Stahl. She bent forward—"The play

play of Hamlet!" She carefully conned over the noted paſſages: ſhe dwelt upon them, and her colour alternately turned pale and red.—When ſhe turned to the laſt page, ſhe appeared to read it over and over, then haſtily raiſing it to her lips, to her breaſt, and to her lips again, ſhe laid it on her knee, with her burning eyes firmly bent on the characters, and her hands reſting upon the book, cloſely claſped together. The boſom of Roſamund throbbed violently. "Dear Madame Stahl, do you know who wrote this?"—"I do," replied ſhe, with a deep ſigh, which ſeemed drawn from the center of her ſoul; "I do. It was Xavier." She raiſed her eyes and hands to Heaven, held them in that attitude for above a minute; then turning on Roſamund, with an air of compoſure, ſaid, "If you will liſten to me, dear young Lady, I will relate to you the cauſe of all that you have ſeen?" Roſamund bowed: Madame Stahl again looked on the book; ſhe pauſed for another moment, and then began.

"You already know, that Count Koningſtein was the hereditary Lord of this Caſtle. When I firſt knew him"—ſhe ſtopped for an inſtant,

inſtant, then proceeded in a firmer voice—"he was young, amiable, and brave. In the conteſt of the Empreſs-Queen againſt the King of Spain and the Elector of Bavaria, he fought by the ſide of Count Daun, who, you muſt know, is yet the firſt of our Auſtrian generals. After the ſettlement of the empire on Charles VII. he ſpent many months in the Caſtle of the Count: he had won the friendſhip of the Daun, and it was as eaſy a taſk to take the heart of his ſiſter. If ever a woman loved, adored, idolized a man, Leopoldina Daun adored Koningſtein. The day in which he left her home, was the laſt of her tranquillity. But I will not enlarge upon what has ſo little to do with my ſtory. The Count quitted the Caſtle to ratify a long engagement, which he had made with the Princeſs Chriſtina, only daughter of the Duke of Saxe Altemburg. He married her, and retired to Koningſtein. Some years after this, a younger ſon of the Houſe of Blackenberg came into Saxony. Count Koningſtein met him at Dreſden. This young Count was handſome in his perſon, and poſſeſſed the character of honour and bravery. He had barely turned his twenty-ſixth year, when my lord brought him to Koningſtein. The Princeſs

ceſs Chriſtina, then, was little more than thirty; ſhe was a woman of not only an attractive form, but of the moſt ſeducing manners. Her fine qualities ſo weaned her Lord from the world, that poſſeſſing her and the friendſhip of Blackenberg, at the age of three and thirty he entirely abandoned arms, to repoſe himſelf within the domains of Koningſtein. At that time this Caſtle was the temple of feſtivity. It was the home of the Royal Thereſa and her infant ſon, while ſhe yet ſuffered the injuſtice of the then reigning Emperor. The noble Koningſtein poured his treaſures before his diſtreſſed Queen, and brought forth all the delights of muſic, feaſting, and hilarity, to brighten the gloom of her ſecluſion. At that period he was father of two lovely boys, the eldeſt of whom was this Xavier, he who wrote theſe prophetic lines. So paſſed three more years of the life of Koningſtein. Soon after, the Queen's forces drove the French out of Bohemia, and the Count and his friend Blackenberg went to the field of Dettingen——"

Madame Stahl ſtopped—the tears rolled over the cheeks of her hearer—their eyes

met—"O my father!" exclaimed Roſamund, and covered her face with her handkerchief. "Yes," reſumed the narrator, in a faltering voice, "As I am told you loſt your father, ſo fell the noble Koningſtein. He was carried home to be buried with his anceſtors. My brother told me of his death; and—O! God knows what was in my heart! but in the middle of the next night I fled from Wurtzburg, where he had left me; and on the ſucceeding evening I was at the gates of this Caſtle." Roſamund haſtily raiſed her head, and beheld the pale face of the houſekeeper grown yet more pallid; her eyes looked wild, and her lips quivered as ſhe proceeded.—"Yes, amiable Roſamund! you ſee before you the unhappy ſiſter of the Count Daun. I had loved Koningſtein through the lingering period of ſixteen years. I had borne his marriage with fortitude. I had ſet a ſeal upon the emotions of my heart; for I had denied myſelf the cold ſolace of recollecting his figure, his voice, his movements!"—Here the tears ſtreamed from the eyes of Leopoldina, and her ſuppreſſed ſobs ſtopped her utterance. Roſamund, with a bleeding heart, preſented her a glaſs of water. She drank it, and went on.

"I ſent

"I ſent for the houſekeeper; I bribed her immediately to introduce me to the family as her niece, and to take me as if to ſerve under her. In the general diſturbance of the houſe, this was eaſily adjuſted.—Once received within its walls, I ſhut myſelf up in one of her rooms. I aſked myſelf my motives for leaving my brother in a manner that I could never return to him. My heart ſoon anſwered me! It was to obtain a laſt look of that form which had been all that was perfect to me. No guilt could ariſe from contemplating the dead. Death had diſſolved his marriage ties, and I was again at liberty to love him. I was little more than fifteen when I ſaw him depart from the Caſtle of my brother. He was then all that was lovely and noble in man. I was hardly more than thirty when I came to this Caſtle—to ſee him, dead!—Roſamund! how can I deſcribe to you what was in my ſoul, when at the depth of night I ſtole out of the room that had been aſſigned to me, and, guided by the light of the tapers which led to the chamber of death, I found my way to the remains of Koningſtein? All in the houſe were at reſt; the watchers had fallen aſleep in the ante-room. The coffin ſtood in the middle of the cham-

ber: its long black pall ſwept the floor—I trod on it as I advanced. O! how my feet recoiled! His ſword, and the order of the Golden-fleece, lay upon the boſom of his ſhroud. I bent over it: I withdrew the cover which concealed his face—I——" Roſamund roſe from her chair, and waving her icy hand to Leopoldina, threw herſelf down into a ſeat in another part of the room, and ſobbed to almoſt ſuffocation. Half an hour had nearly elapſed before they recovered themſelves: at laſt Leopoldina roſe, and placing herſelf beſide Roſamund, proceeded:

" Koningſtein, my ſoul's idol, was conſigned to the earth three days after; but on the nights of thoſe three days I never quitted his coffin: it held all my heart's treaſure; and to have parted with it until it was torn from me—O, I could not!—a fortnight had paſſed over before I could quit my room: and, perhaps, I might not then have done it, had I not been ſurpriſed one morning by the entrance of a lovely boy; he ſeemed to be about five years old. He came to my bedſide, and looking in my face, inquired who I was? His was the voice, the looks of my adored Koningſtein.

ſtein. I claſped him to my heart. I read his angel father in every lineament of his blooming features. I reſolved to live for him. I too well knew the ſcrupulous honour of my brother, ever to form the wiſh of returning to him again. I had determined to immure myſelf in a Convent; but the ſight of this lovely babe turned the whole current of my reſolves. He kiſſed me with fondneſs; and from that hour I recovered rapidly. I contrived to employ myſelf in ſome little way about the Caſtle, the better to conceal the real motives of my ſtay. The Counteſs was yet confined to her apartment, from exceſs of grief; ſhe would admit no one to her preſence, except Count Blackenberg, the favourite friend of her huſband. The young Count Xavier had been ſent for to Leipſic, at which univerſity he had been for three years, and now was expected daily at the Caſtle. In ſhort, my dear Roſamund, it was exactly that day two months, on which Koningſtein had been buried, that on the next morning the young lord was poſitively to be at home. I never had ſeen the Counteſs till the evening preceding that day. She then came downſtairs, covered from obſervation by a long black veil.

Her carriage, and a large eſcort of ſervants, were ready mounted at the gate. I happened to be caſually ſitting in a window that looked over the draw-bridge. I ſaw the beautiful form of the Counteſs, led by Count Blackenberg, whoſe ſable garments bore about him the true *ſemblance of woe*. He handed her into the carriage, ſtepped in after her, and they both drove off at a full gallop, followed by the horſemen. The dear little Sigiſmund afterwards told me, that his mother was gone to invite the Margrave of Miſnia to come and welcome her eldeſt ſon on the following day.

That day came, but the Counteſs was not returned. Noon arrived, and yet no intelligence of the lady nor her retinue. In the evening I heard a carriage drive into the courtyard. Sigiſmund was lying on my knee in the large hall when its wheels rolled under the arch-way. As the child was aſleep, I did not wiſh to awaken him, and hoped, from the twilight of the evening, that the Counteſs, if it were ſhe, would, in her way to the grand ſtair-caſe, paſs me unobſerved. The doors were thrown open; in a moment, the arms of an elegant young man were encircled round my

my neck. My heart told me that it was the ſon of my Koningſtein; and, mute with ſurpriſe, and a renewed ſwell of agony, I was unable to ſpeak or to extricate myſelf. He was ſpeechleſs; while his tears poured into my boſom. He fixed his quivering lips on my deluged cheek, and, dropping at my feet, kiſſed the dear ſleeping Sigiſmund. It was then he found words—"O, my Sigiſmund! I will be more than a brother to thee; and you, my mother," ſaid he, kiſſing my hands, "take comfort in the affection of a ſon that will only live to love and honour thee!" He bathed my hands with his tears; while Sigiſmund, who now was awakened, clung about the neck of his brother, and ſobbed violently. At laſt, though almoſt choaked with tears, I exclaimed, "I am not your mother!" He ſtarted up. "Not my mother!—O, where is ſhe? where is my dear unhappy mother? O tell me!" At that moment a loud clamour of carriages and horſes were heard in the court; in the next, the hall door was thrown open, and a multitude of flambeaus ſtreamed into the porch, followed by a whole cavalcade of ladies and gentlemen in ſplendid habits. We ſtarted up. I retreated

ed behind a pillar, where, exhauſted by my recent feelings, I ſunk into a ſeat.

I ſaw the Count Xavier ſtill ſtanding in an amazed attitude; when ſuddenly a lady advanced to him, blazing from head to foot with jewels. My ſon," ſaid ſhe, " this is now your father." Count Blackenberg came forward, equally gaily dreſſed; he took the paſſive hand of Xavier, who ſtood gazing on his mother without word or motion. " Xavier," continued ſhe, " congratulate your father!" The moment the Count's hand touched his, he flung it from him. " Go, ſir! I have now neither father nor mother !—Off!" ſaid he to the princeſs, as ſhe threw her arms around him. She wept violently, and caſt her head into the boſom of her huſband. One of the ladies entreated the young Count at leaſt to reſpect the tears of his mother. He looked on her as Blackenberg preſſed her to his heart and conjured her to be comforted; " No," cried he, with a ſmile of agony, " let the huſband ſhe has choſen be her ſon alſo!" and turning away with a look of the moſt heart-rending anguiſh, entered the gallery which led to his own apartments.

The

The fainting Princeſs was carried by the ladies into the purple ſaloon, while the ſweet Sigiſmund flew to beſeech me to go and comfort his dear brother. The innocent child wept as he repeated to me part of the converſation I had overheard. "My mother has given me a new father," ſobbed he, "but he looked ſo cruel on my poor brother, that I ſhall hate him." I claſped the dear weeping angel to my breaſt, as he implored, and actually dragged me to the door of Xavier's apartment. He puſhed it open, and I ſaw the dear young man ſitting, with his head reſting on his folded arms, on the table. The noiſe the little Sigiſmund made in ruſhing into the room, rouſed his brother; he jumped up; I ſuppoſe thinking it was ſome of Blackenberg's meſſengers, for his eyes flaſhed fire: but the moment he perceived me, the ſweet gentleneſs of his nature ſuffuſed every feature; and coming up to me, he tried to ſpeak, but he could not! he only preſſed my hands fervently to his lips, and placing me on a ſofa, ſat down beſide me. He ſtill held my hands, while the tears poured in torrents over his cheeks: my eyes rained down, my temples throbbed almoſt to madneſs. He obſerved my emotions, and they redoubled

redoubled his. He walked up and down the room. He preſſed his hand to his forehead, to his breaſt, and to his forehead again.—Then turning to me, he once more threw himſelf upon the ſofa, and graſping both my hands in his, he cried, "Yes, you are indeed my mother; ſhe has no heart—my father, my dear, dear, my noble father?" And again his agitations became ungovernable. Sigiſmund lay weeping on my boſom, with his ſweet arms encircling my neck. Xavier looked at us, wrung his hands in an agony; then folding us in his arms, ſtrained me to his breaſt, and ſpringing ſuddenly into his bed-room, cloſed the door after him, leaving me with ſtruggling ſenſations that almoſt burſt my heart. I remained for a moment; I heard the piercing groans of the dear creature as I went out of his dreſſing-room. I left Sigiſmund lying upon the ſofa, ſobbing and weeping his ſweet eyes almoſt blind.——Alas! from his cradle he was a child of ſorrows! How early did they begin! how ſoon did they terminate! Wretched, wretched family!"

Leopoldina ſtopped, and ſeemed almoſt fainting. She leaned her head againſt the tapeſtry of

of the room. Roſamund continued ſilent.—She roſe, and with a pale and diſtreſſed countenance, offered to withdraw: but Leopoldina, ſtretching out her hand, "Sit down, dear Roſamund, it is a diſmal ſtory, but I would rather finiſh it at once. In a few minutes I ſhall recover myſelf." Roſamund obeyed her; and with a boſom too full for reply, once more took her ſeat.

CHAP. IV.

" *Al fin, al fin cayo muerto*
" *Al pie de un pena alta.—*
" *—Muerto queda don Alonſo,*
" *Eterna fama ganara.*"
Hiſt. de las Civiles Guerras de Granada

" Where yon rock the plain o'er ſhadows.
" Cloſe beneath its foot retir'd,
" Fainting ſunk the bleeding hero,
" And without a groan expired."

AFTER a pauſe of ten minutes, Leopoldina again reſumed. "The Count Xavier never would be reconciled to his mother nor to her huſband. During the time their bridal gueſts continued in the Caſtle, he ſeldom was ſeen by any of them; ſometimes it happened by

by chance, when he was wandering about ſome obſcure corner of the park, or ſtrolling up and down before the mauſoleum that contains the remains of his father. There, with folded arms, he would walk for hours together, until ſome of the gay company began to riſe: as they appeared, he would return into the houſe: and locking himſelf within the ſtudy, whence you brought this book, would employ himſelf there until the evening. His brother and myſelf were the only beings whom he would ſuffer to diſturb his quiet. Sigiſmund uſed to be the bearer of what he would eat, but that was but ſmall. His appetite was gone; he grew thin and pale as death. My anxiety for his life, amounted to abſolute miſery.

When all were in bed, he and his ſweet brother (for they were both now neglected) would come into my apartments, and ſit with me until almoſt the break of day. His tears now were dried up, but all his ſmiles had diſappeared. I would entreat him to take care of his exiſtence, for the ſake of his dear brother. The lovely child would kneel at his feet, and bathing his pale hand with his tears, pray him to live.

live. O, I could repeat ſuch inſtances of wonderful feeling in that dear infant, as is almoſt improbable! But his early ſufferings had matured his mind and heart, far, far beyond his years! The ever-graceful Xavier, would raiſe him in his arms; would cover him with kiſſes; and tell him to be comforted, for that a good God would be his father. Then Sigiſmund wept and ſighed, until the life-blood had left his cheek, and made it almoſt as pale as his brother's. How my heart hung over theſe two ſuffering angels! Their only conſolation was in me; and Heaven knows, my whole ſoul was bound up in them.

The beautiful, but weak Princeſs appeared to have completely forgotten that ſhe had been a widow; or that ſhe poſſeſſed children. The Caſtle was crowded, week after week, with new ſucceſſion of company; and the ſong and dance reſounded for ever in the walls. In ſhort, the inſolence of the Count Blackenberg became ſo great, that he had drawn his plan, and was preparing to cut down part of the old north wood at the extremity of the domains; with an intention of erecting

ſome fantaſtic pavilion on the ſpot. Xavier happened to be paſſing through the hall, when the inſidious villain was giving his commands to the ſteward. Count Xavier approached them both; his whole ſoul ſwelling with indignation, and before Blackenberg had finiſhed his orders—"Steward!" exclaimed the dear boy, in a voice of ſtern dignity, "I am your lord! and tell that man, who uſurps the title, that my domains ſhall no longer be abuſed: tell him, that the Caſtle of my noble father ſhall no longer be a den for ingratitude and vice!" Blackenberg, his face bloated with rage, would have ſpoken; but Xavier turned calmly away and went into the park.

"From that day no terms were kept with the dear children of Koningſtein. Xavier baniſhed himſelf: but the lovely Sigiſmund was forbidden to appear in the ſight of his offended mother.

"Thus paſſed five heavy months, in the once happy Caſtle of Koningſtein. For the ſake of his mother, Count Xavier ſtill refrained from putting his threats into execution, though the ſight of Blackenberg was poiſon

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in his eyes. Unhappy as he was, he was my ſolace, and the inſtructor of his ſweet Sigiſmund. If ever a beam of pleaſure illumined his lovely eyes, it was when he contemplated the wonderful powers of his brother's mind. He would ſometimes anticipate the rapture of having one day a boſom friend and comforter in the brother of his heart.—Often has he ſaid to me, while a ſunſhine of delight fluſhed his pale cheek, "I will be a father to this dear child; I will live for him; I will be ambitious for him. For myſelf, dear Madame Stahl, I have no wiſhes! They are in Heaven with my father, or, O God! they are on earth with Blackenberg and vengeance." Then, and only then, his fair forehead would be clouded; but he would ſoon ſhake it off, and preſſing his brother in his arms, would ſay, "O, that my heart was as calm as thine!"

"One evening after a converſation of this kind, the night being ſoft and pleaſant, he aſked me if I would ſuffer him to row me up the Elbe. I conſented, and taking Sigiſmund along with us, Xavier ordered the ſervants to bring out one of the ſmall boats. The men told us, that the Count and Counteſs with

their party had been out all the afternoon, and had taken every one excepting the old yacht. As this was ſafe enough, though not ſo light as the others, he gave up the idea of rowing himſelf, but declared that I ſhould not be diſappointed of my ſail. In vain I told him I only went for the happineſs of being with him; that on the water or in my own room, it was all the ſame to me. He inſiſted upon our going, ſaying, with a faint ſmile, "He had brought his flute to amuſe me, to ſhew me I had not yet diſcovered half his accompliſhments." He handed me into the yacht, and there being a ſweet ſouth breeze, we ſailed ſmoothly down the river. The moon, with all her ſtars, were ſhining over our heads, and reflecting their mild luſtre on the water. The dark woods ſhelving down to the river's brink, caſt a murky ſhade that gave a brighter effect to the liquid effulgence of the planet. The air was perfectly ſtill, nothing was heard but the flapping of the ſail againſt the maſt, and the ſoft rippling of the water, as we ſlowly paſſed through its boſom. O, I never can forget that night!

"Xavier

" Xavier raiſed his flute to his lips, and breathed one of the moſt touching airs that ever met mine ear. I liſtened to it almoſt entranced, with my ſweet Sigiſmund reſting his cherub head upon my knee. The man at the ſteerage abruptly exclaimed, " There is the Count's party!" Xavier dropped the flute from his hand. " How they haunt me!" ſighed he, and gave orders for the men to turn the yacht under the bank, that it might be loſt in the ſhadow of the trees, while the boiſterous pageantry paſſed on. The men did as they were deſired, and ſoon, the full and joyous boats were crowding paſt. The ſoft notes of my Xavier's flute had not been heard by them; their own noiſe had completely drowned every other ſound. Indeed, I cannot compare their uproar and diſſonance, to any milder ſimilitude than an aſſembly of intoxicated *Bacchantii*.

" I was felicitating myſelf on the idea of their being all gone by, when I heard a loud craſh and ſcream at the ſtern of our veſſel.—One of the little boats, not ſeeing ours in the dark, had run up againſt it, and bulging, was quickly ſinking to the bottom. Sigiſmund ruſhed from my arms: all was terror and con-

fuſion; every arm was over the yacht in a moment, and the veſſel was preſently crowded by the half-drowned party. Their terror was ſo great, that the women ſtill continued ſcreaming, and the men, loudly to deplore the accident. Sigiſmund came running to me, and holding up his little hands, kept wringing them and ſhrieking, until my fears of I knew not what, laid me ſenſeleſs at his ſide.

" When I recovered, I found myſelf in my own room, ſurrounded by ſome female ſervants and my honeſt Jagellon, who had ſurrendered up her place to me, that I might the better remain in the houſe. I called for Sigiſmund, for Xavier; at his name every eye was bathed in tears. " Alas! he is drowned!—In ſaving our Lord the Count, he was drowned!" At theſe words I again relapſed into a ſwoon; and when I awoke, it was only to be completely miſerable. The little Sigiſmund ſat by my ſide; his ſweet face wore the hues of death; his eye looked red and ſwollen, though not a tear appeared to cool it. I took him in my arms; he trembled, and burnt as if in a fever. The poor child ſeemed ſtupified with grief; he lay in my breaſt motionleſs, with his

his beautiful eyes fixed on the cieling. At that moment of torture, ſeveral ladies, followed by the Count, came in to take him to his mother, whoſe affliction for the loſs of her ſon now was exceſſive. The moment the Count approached me to take him; the inſtant the dear creature's eye ſaw him, his ſcreams pierced my heart, he clung to me; and when the Count touched him, his ſhriek was almoſt more than mortal. In ſpite of his ſtruggles and cries, the monſter took him from my arms; the dear babe fainted on his breaſt, while with a lowering and tremendous brow, he carried him out of the room, followed by the ladies, ſome pitying the child, and ſome declaring againſt its obſtinacy.

" My heart was almoſt broken; and the long night that I uſed to paſs by the ſide of my deareſt Xavier, ſoothing his ſorrows, I now wore away in deploring my own. The next morning his beloved body was found and brought to the Caſtle. I will not tell you what I ſuffered, when I ſaw it laid out in the room where you now ſleep. It was the chamber of Sigiſmund; when I entered it, the dear child already was there, ſtanding like a little

ſtatue

ſtatue at the ſide of his brother's head. I ſat down near him; we watched until the evening, when a meſſage came from the Princeſs, to deſire that every one might withdraw, as ſhe was coming to viſit the remains of her ſon. I went into the adjoining apartment, where I could clearly hear all that paſſed. The poor lady entered alone, and wept and mourned moſt bitterly her cruelty to her injured Xavier. My child yet hung over his brother, for I heard the Princeſs ſay, "Sigiſmund, your looks will break my heart!" A long ſilence enſued. The door opened again; it was the Count who entered, he begged the Counteſs to be comforted. She wept more violently, telling him to beſeech Sigiſmund to forgive her treatment of his brother, and to bring him to her to conſole her with his pardon. She went out of the room, and another ten minutes were again ſilent; at laſt, I heard him ſay, "Come child, this grief is fooliſh, you know you cannot make your brother alive again!" I ſuppoſe he attempted to take hold of him, for I heard the dear babe moan moſt piteouſly, and cry out, in a convulſed voice, "You drowned him! I ſaw you puſh him into the water!" "You little villain!" exclaimed the Count,

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in accents of conſternation, "you lie! Say that again, and I will kill you."—"Do!" cried the dear innocent, "and bury me with Xavier, for you drowned him, I will tell it to all the world. My brother! my brother!" ſhrieked the ſtruggling child. "Let me go, you killed him! O, you killed him!" At that moment, as I ſat petrified to my ſeat, I heard a ſudden plunge into the river, and the Princeſs ran ſhrieking into the apartment, "O, my child!" cried ſhe, and fell upon the floor. I flew, but my trembling limbs would hardly ſupport me into the room: it was crowded by ſervants drawn there by the ſhrieks. The Princeſs had ſwooned on the floor, and the Count upheld her in his arms with the wildeſt frenzy and diſtraction in his looks. "What is the matter?" cried one of the ladies, as ſhe entered. Unable to ſpeak, I was gazing wildly round the room for Sigiſmund, but he was not there. "Oh!" cried the Count, "that perverſe child has this moment flung himſelf into the river!" I flew to the window, but it was dark; I could ſee nothing; I could hear nothing but the daſhing of the waves; I ſcreamed almoſt to the rending of my heart; I would have called on his name,

name, but I could only articulate the moſt piercing ſhrieks.

" In ſhort, Roſamund, my Sigiſmund was drowned. His dear body never was diſcovered, elſe I would have kiſſed the feet of the wretch, who, I never will believe, was otherwiſe than the murderer of them both. I would have kiſſed his feet, but he ſhould have been buried with his brother.

" I was taken from the apartment of the dead Xavier, who lay motionleſs and in peace in the midſt of ſo many horrors. The convulſions of my body, with the tortures of my mind, brought on a fever of the brain, which confined me fourteen weeks almoſt in the very arms of death. When I recovered from my delirium, I looked around, and beheld Jagellon and the other ſervants in the deepeſt black. This ſight brought all my afflictions before my eyes, and I wept profuſely for an hour. When I became a little compoſed, I inquired how long I had been ill? Jagellon told me fourteen weeks, and that the young count had been buried the ſecond day after I had taken my bed; that the Princeſs had ſince

died

died in a fit of the greateſt agony; and that ſhe had been conſigned to the tomb with the greateſt pomp about a month ago. Since then, dear Roſamund, I have been detained in this ſpot: though abhorring the ſight of the Count Blackenberg, yet I find ſuch an irreſiſtible attraction to the place which contains the bodies of my beloved Koningſtein and his darling ſon, that I never will quit it. I believe, as my brother has ceaſed to ſearch after me, he has perfectly forgotten his ſeemingly abandoned ſiſter. And undiſturbed by any thing but my own griefs, I have remained here as houſekeeper theſe fourteen years.

"Count Blackenberg, though the domains devolved to him as the only remaining connection of a houſe entirely extinct, left the caſtle immediately on the demiſe of the princeſs, and never returned to it until he brought your aunt as his bride."

Leopoldina ceaſed; the caſtle clock ſtruck four. It was now almoſt day-light, and Roſamund yet remained drowned in tears, Leopoldina ſighed heavily as ſhe propoſed attending her to her chamber. Roſamund roſe, and

followed

followed her conductreſs. At the door of her own room ſhe caught her hand, and preſſing it firmly between her's, in a broken voice wiſhed her a "good night." And ſhutting herſelf in, threw her exhauſted form on the bed, with her clothes yet on, and wept herſelf to ſleep.

CHAP. V.

" —— *Oh dove ſono!*
" *Qual dolcezza mies face!*
" *Com' venni in tanta pace!*
" *Chi ſcorta fu? Con chi parlo e ragiono?*
" *Onde sì dolce calma?*
" *Che ſoverchio piacer via caccia l' alma?*"

POLIZIANO.

Ah me! where am I? What delicious power
Melts my ſoft heart in this propitious hour?
How came I to this heaven? What bleſſed force
Hath led me here? With whom do I diſcourſe?
Tell me, ah tell me! what divine control,
In tides of rapture, bears away my ſoul?

IT was far advanced in the day before Roſamund opened her weary eyes. As ſhe pulled aſide the curtain of her bed, the blazing beams of a noon ſun ſhone upon her face. She ſprang

ſprang up, ſurpriſed at the length of her ſlumber, and prepared to redreſs herſelf. She had hardly finiſhed before a ſervant came to tell her that the Counteſs waited breakfaſt for her in the parlour.

She hurried down ſtairs, when her aunt received her with a ſmiling countenance.—"Come, Roſamund, my dear! I am ſcarcely an hour returned from Miſſein-Caſtle. I want your taſte to aſſiſt mine. I have this moment received letters, both from my lord, and my ſiſter the Vicomteſſe de Solignac. My lord muſt be at home in a few days, and the Vicomte and Vicomteſſe will be from England in the courſe of a fortnight. Now, what I want with you, Roſamund, is this, I would wiſh to ſhew my ſiſter that the wealth of my lord is ſuperior to her's. She was always an inſolent girl, and a little mortification of her vanity would be ſalutary. Can you deviſe any pageantry that I may exhibit at her arrival?"—"Indeed, Madam," ſaid Roſamund, "you know my ignorance on theſe ſubjects too well, to expect that I can do any thing but decline the taſk. I cannot deſign, but I am very ready to execute whatever you may imagine."—

"Well, my dear," replied ſhe, "let me conſider!" She was ſilent for a few minutes, then reſumed. "I will have two magnificent thrones erected: the one in the purple, the other in the crimſon ſaloon: as the folding doors of both apartments are very large, and directly oppoſite to each other, I will have them thrown open and their arch-ways, draperied with embroidered cloth of gold, on which the Count's arms ſhall be emblazoned. All thoſe great gothic pillars that ſupport the hall muſt be bound with flowers: the frightful old coats of mail ſhall be covered by an arras of ſcarlet damaſk, embroidered with gold. That I ſhall write for immediately: give me the pen and ink." Roſamund obeyed her in ſilence: and while the Counteſs was buſily employed in deſcribing to her agent at Hamburgh the various deſigns ſhe wanted on the damaſk, Roſamund ſat with her thoughts perfectly abſtracted from her aunt and her grandeur: they were with the intereſting Leopoldina, and the two lovely brothers in their watery grave.

"Now, my dear!" cried the Counteſs, as ſhe rang the bell, "what elſe have you fixed on?"

on?" Roſamund ſtarted, and the better to conceal her inattention, ſaid. "Suppoſe your Ladyſhip were to have the floors ſtrewn with flowers?"—"An excellent idea!" cried ſhe as a ſervant entered; and ſhe gave him the letter, ordering it to be haſtened off by an expreſs-carriage to Hamburgh, for the conveyance of the things for which ſhe had ſent.

"An excellent idea, Roſamund!" repeated ſhe; "It will be ſo beautiful! To ſhew that I do not mind expence, they ſhall be artificial flowers, ancle deep upon the floors. I will ſend to Dreſden for them."—"But they will want fragrance." ſaid Roſamund, ſmiling at the energy of her aunt. "Never mind that," cried ſhe, "perfumes can ſupply their natural ſmell; and for plenty of them, I would ranſack all Saxony."

Thus the Counteſs continued dragging her niece over all the baſement ſtory, as that, ſhe intended, ſhould be the ſcene of her triumph. The grand hall, ſhe declared, beſides its intended new draperies and vernal fillets, ſhould hold her women dreſſed as angels, with their wings extended; they ſhould be ſet in a ring,

within the rails of the corridor, which went round the hall; and from baſkets of conſtantly repleniſhed materials, perfectly concealed behind them, ſhower fruits, cakes, flowers, and the moſt aromatic eſſences upon the heads of her gueſts as they paſſed through and through the hall. Roſamund could hardly forbear laughing at this ridiculous arrangement, as ſhe ſat quietly in a corner of the crimſon-ſaloon, whilſt the delighted Counteſs ſummoned all her domeſtics, to give them her reſpective orders. She was juſt ſending off a dozen footmen with invitations to half the nobles of the Empire, when the Count ſuddenly walked into the room. The blood of Roſamund ran cold at the abruptneſs of his entrance. He embraced his enraptured wife, who flew to him with redoubled pleaſure, as ſhe looked on him as the giver of thoſe riches with which ſhe intended to mortify her ſiſter.

Roſamund turned pale as he approached her; when he took her in his arms ſhe unconſciouſly ſlid from them, and dropt upon the ground trembling and paler with abhorrence. "What is the matter, child?" cried he, "What, do you ſuppoſe that I will hurt you?"—"No, my

my Lord," ſaid ſhe riſing, if poſſible yet more pallid; "but I am very nervous." The Count turned from her with a look of contempt, and inquired of his wife, what was the reaſon that none of his ſervants were ready in the outer-hall to meet his ſuite? "It was moſt abominable!" exclaimed he, "becauſe the Duke of Duex-ponts has accompanied me down, and intends ſtaying a month at the Caſtle,"—The Counteſs, in fearful confuſion, related to her Lord the ſubſtance of her intended ſhow. The Count remained in ſullen ſilence ſome time, while his wife trembled with apprehenſion of his interdicting this dear ſcheme of her pride. At laſt he turned out of the room to join his Highneſs in the hall; and as he cloſed the door, ſaid, "Well, do as you pleaſe."

Roſamund would now have returned to her own room, or have gone into the north wing of the Caſtle to ſeek the Lady Leopoldina; but juſt as ſhe was re-opening the door, her aunt called her back, and deſired her to make a ſketch of a proper habit for her angels. Roſamund reluctantly followed her Ladyſhip to her dreſſing-room; where, taking her port-crayon, ſhe began and continued her taſk for

above an hour; while the Counteſs ſat in the middle of the chamber, ſurrounded by all the young women of her houſehold, to whom ſhe was portioning out the white lawn for their celeſtial robes. This occupied the whole of the morning. But juſt before ſhe diſmiſſed the girls from her preſence, ſhe ſuggeſted to Roſamund, "whether it would not be a beautiful addition, could ſhe put a chaplet of coloured lamps around the brows of each of her angels?" Her niece, with ſome difficulty, convinced her of the impracticability of this whim; and the Counteſs acquieſced, provided they might have gilded crowns. This weighty affair ſettled, Roſamund was again moving towards the door, when her aunt pulled her into the corridor. "Dear child! exclaimed ſhe, "what can make you in ſuch a haſte?—You will have time enough to imagine your own dreſs: I want to tell you what I have fixed upon for the muſicians; abſolutely fixed upon it, ſo do not make any objection! They ſhall be hung up, one by one, in large ſtrong baſkets, covered with blue and white drapery, intermixed with lamps to repreſent the ſky and ſtars, and be ſuſpended by a chain, run up with lamps from theſe ſtrong rafters of the hall.

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The company will be entranced, and die to know where the ſtrain come from. Will it not be admirable?'—"Quite the muſic of the ſpheres!" replied Roſamund with a ſmile, "Exactly ſo?" cried her aunt; "I intended that.—The muſic of the ſpheres, with angels ſhowering roſes! were there ever any ideas ſo charming?" The raptures of the Counteſs knew no bounds: and not until the ſecond bell rang for dinner would ſhe permit her niece to retire to dreſs.

The reſt of the day was ſpent in the loathſome preſence of the Count. He was in what he called one of his happieſt humours: and had it not been for the ſoothing complacence of the veteran Duke, poor Roſamund muſt have fainted from an abſolute ſickneſs, whenever her uncle approached. While he ſpoke to her, a dark frown would cover her mild eyes; and when he drew near her, the faint colour would entirely leave her cheek. The varying expreſſion of her fine face intereſted the heart of Deux-ponts, though he could not account for why ſhe felt as her countenance indicated. With him her converſation was unembarraſſed, and the ſweet intelligence of her lovely mind diſplayed

diſplayed itſelf on every ſubject on which he dwelt. He thought with wonder on the evident averſion which ſhe ſeemed to evince for the huſband of her aunt. And when ſhe aroſe to follow the Counteſs out of the room, the Duke took her hand with an air of potent reſpect, then ſaying, "Good night, fair lady; may your dreams be as pleaſant as you are lovely!" Roſamund bluſhed, ſmiled, and bowed. Blackenberg advanced and would have taken her hand alſo, but ſhe ſhrank from him, and haſtily was following her aunt, but he caught hold of her robe, pulled her back, and forcibly ſeized her hands: "Why this coyneſs with your uncle?" ſaid he in a gay voice, whilſt his ſcowling eyes looked as if they would have dived into her heart. She ſtruggled to be free. Her blanched cheeks and pallid lips ſpoke a fear which was incomprehenſible to the Duke: he began to ſuſpect the integrity of his friend towards this lovely girl, and he determined to obſerve. Blackenberg ſtill held her; he jocoſely would have ſtrained her to his breaſt, but, almoſt frantic with horror, ſhe half breathed the name of "Xavier!" and ſunk ſenſeleſs upon his arm. At the ſound, Blackenberg flung her from him: "Girl!" cried

cried he, in a voice of thunder, and with a look that ſhe did not ſee, for ſhe was now hurrying out of the room, but which petrified the Duke. The Count turned abruptly round, and perceiving Deux-ponts, burſt into a loud laugh; then aſked if his Highneſs ever before ſaw ſo egregious a little ideot as this niece of the Counteſs? The Duke only ſmiled, and complained that he was fatigued with the length of their journey, begged permiſſion to retire. The Count ordered the groom of the chambers to attend his Highneſs to his apartments; then, with rather a diſturbed and incenſed mind, turned to his own.

When Roſamund entered her bed-chamber, ſhe placed her lamp on the toilet, and opening the dim painted caſement of the eaſtern window, faſtened it back while ſhe enhaled the ſweet air as it floated from the ſouth. All was ſtill as death; not a leaf of the thick foreſt trembled, nor a wave of the Elbe ruffled the clear mirror of molten ſilver which the bright moon, now raiſed above the ſummits of the Bohemian hills, reflected on its broad boſom. Roſamund contemplated the ſoft ſtillneſs of nature, and extinguiſhing her lamp, by the light of the

the moon, ſlowly and quietly took off her clothes, as if afraid to diſturb the ſublime repoſe of the ſcene. She laid herſelf down upon the bed. The Caſtle was ſilent. And reclining her cheek upon her hand, ſhe hearkened alone to the low beatings of her heart.

She thought of Leopoldina, of Xavier, of his brother. She ſighed heavily, and the big tears ſwam over her hand upon the pillow. A ſoft thrilling ſound ſeemed to ſwell upon the air. She liſtened breathleſsly. The ſtrains ſucceeded each other with a melody and pathos that ſtruck to her ſoul. She tried to recollect which of the inhabitants of the Caſtle was muſical; and what kind of inſtrument it was, but this ſhe could not determine; for never till then had ſhe heard ſtrains that ſo entranced her heart. It could be no one but the Duke; and for why he ſhould prefer ſerenading her, to the repoſe that his fatigue required, ſhe could not imagine. In theſe conjectures ſhe lay liſtening till the muſic gradually died away, and with its laſt tones ſhe ſank to ſleep.

In the morning the Count met her with forced complacence. When the Duke inquired

quired after her health, ſhe bluſhed, and turning her ſoft eyes upon him, with an ingenious ſmile, ſaid, "Indeed, my Lord, my health is much indebted to my ſlumbers, and they to you." The Duke bowed, whilſt his bronzed cheek glowed with pleaſure. "A very delicate confeſſion for a young lady!" cried her aunt laughing; "this is actually wooing his Highneſs." The Duke more pleaſed, took the hand of the confuſed Roſamund: "Dare I tranſlate it ſo?" A deeper dye now ſuffuſed her face, as ſhe exclaimed; "I will explain myſelf, my Lord: I mean, that I was obliged to the enchanting muſic, which I believe your Highneſs played in the turret under my window laſt night, for the ſweetneſs of my ſlumber."—"Muſic!" cried the Duke, "I played no muſic; you ſpeak in riddles."—"Well then," ſaid Roſamund, with ſurpriſe, "ſome one did play, and in ſtrains that appeared more of heaven than earth. I believe none of my aunt's domeſtics have that art; and I think it can hardly be the execution of one of your Highneſs's attendants?"—"Whoever it was," ſaid the Duke, "I am ſorry to ſay that it was not me. Perhaps it was the Count here, willing

to

to make up the little quarrel with which you parted laſt night?" Roſamund turned away her head. "No," ſaid Blackenberg, with indifference, "moſt likely it was imagination; her fancy I believe being very prolific on many occaſions."—"What do you ſay to that charge?" ſaid the Duke, taking her hand, and trying by his gay air to turn the ſevere manner in which the Count had ſpoken, into a joke; "what do you ſay to ſuch a charge? Speak, my fair client, for in all ſituations—(and he threw an emphatic expreſſion into his eyes)—I will be your advocate."—"Then I plead, not guilty," returned ſhe, with a grateful ſmile, which ſoon gave place to the quivering of her lip, as ſhe ſaid, "my imagination is not ſo warm, but that my memory is retentive; and I wiſh that it could be proved to me, that the muſic I heard was nothing but a heat of the brain, elſe——" She ſtopped and turned pale, while her eyes looked ghaſtly upon the Count. He jumpt up, "You fool!" cried he, with ten thouſand furies darting from his eyes. Roſamund trembled, and fervently graſped the Duke's hand:—"What is all this?" whiſpered he to her. She ſhook her head; and the Count reſeating himſelf

himſelf with affected compoſure, turned to his wife, who ſat ſtaring with ſurpriſe, "I know the weakneſs of your nerves, my love, yet this idle girl will perſiſt in telling tales to frighten you."—"Indeed, Roſamund," ſaid he, addreſſing her, "you make me angry with you; and if ever I diſcover what babbling old witch has been terrifying you with theſe ſtories, I will bury her alive.

Though he attempted to laugh as he uttered this, the Duke obſerved with amaze, that his face was pale, and his eye looked fiercely on his niece; whoſe heaving boſom and pallid cheek intereſted his heart moſt deeply. "Surely (thought he) the Count has diſplayed ſome horrid deſigns againſt this innocent girl, which ſhe is afraid to reveal to her aunt. Some villany may be premeditated." From that moment he determined to watch Blackenberg; and in caſe his ſuſpicions ſhould prove true, to the laſt drop of his blood to protect Roſamund.

As the Count turned to her, her confuſion redoubled; and riſing from her chair, ſhe was withdrawing from the room, when he called

her back: "Roſamund! this inſtant return. I will not allow of theſe fears" as he ſpoke, he fixed his back againſt the door, and ſhe retook her ſeat. "What fears? my Lord," inquired the Counteſs, with a ſmile of ſurpriſe; "ſhe has not expreſſed any, without you denominate a fear, her wiſh for the gallantry of his Highneſs?" Blackenberg coloured and ſat down. "The girl is an abſolute ideot!" cried he, peeviſhly, "and looks more than ſhe ſays." Roſamund only ſighed. The Duke, retaking her hand, ſaid, let me feel your pulſe, my dear? I am afraid you are ill. The vivacity of your aunt, and the jeſting of your uncle, have quite overcome you?" Roſamund bowed: "It has," ſaid ſhe, ſcarce articulately. The Count now laughed aloud; and forcibly ſeizing her other hand, held it firmly, though he felt it as cold as death. "Yes, my dear, I was jeſting: I only wanted to banter the paleneſs of your countenance, when you heard that it was not the Duke who gave the ſerenade. I did not think that jealouſy could ſo ſoon diſplace theſe roſes!" and he gave her a pat on the cheek, whoſe heightened colour now burned with indignation, at the immodeſty of principle which his

his duplicity wiſhed to throw upon her diſpoſition. "Sir!" ſaid ſhe, "I would contradict you, but I believe that the rectitude of the Duke's heart will judge rightly of mine."—"I do," haſtily exclaimed his Highneſs; "I believe that you eſteem me as warmly as I have the preſumption to wiſh:" he cloſed this ſpeech with an expreſſion of paternal tenderneſs in his eye, which ſpoke truth to her ſoul; while Roſamund replied with grateful energy, "I do."

She would have again riſen; but the Count, who had his eyes fixed on the floor, liſtening attentively, and pleaſed at this part of the converſation, ſtill graſped the hand he held.—"Come Roſamund, you and the Duke ſhall take a walk with me this fine morning round the weſtern part of the park, while the Counteſs is enlarging her orders for her fête." The Duke gave an aſſuring preſſure to her hand; and putting her arm through his, they both followed Blackenberg on to the lawn. The Count as they proceeded deſcanted moſt largely on the improvements which he had planned. Some the Duke approved; and ſome, he ventured to ſay, he thought were

blemiſhes. In this ſtroll, which occupied the whole of a very long morning, Roſamund would have enjoyed the beauties of nature with a moſt vivid reliſh, had ſhe been walking on any other grounds than the grounds of the murdered Counts of Koningſtein, or with any other companion than the man whom ſhe believed their murderer. Every prominent beauty involved her deeper in melancholy, and heightened the colours of horror which preſſed upon her mind. Thoſe verdant hills; theſe wide-extended woods; that magnificent Caſtle, whoſe towers gave expreſſion to the features of the landſcape, whichever way ſhe turned, might have been inhabited by beings amiable as illuſtrious. Their dear and valued lives had been the ſacrifice to purchaſe theſe hills, woods, and Caſtle for Blackenberg, their aſſaſſin: and this aſſaſſin was in her company, and had hold of her arm! She ſhuddered; and turning to the Duke, ſaid, "My Lord, I am very ſick; do allow me to ſit down." Her paleneſs verified her requeſt. The Duke placed her upon a trunk of a fallen tree, as much as poſſible ſhielded from the riſing wind; and ſat down beſide her: ſo did alſo the Count. But fortunately for her feelings, he took the other

arm

arm of his Highneſs; and ſtill continued diſcourſing on a project which he had formed of cutting down the old north wood, and planting it afreſh with young timber. Roſamund remembered that this wood was loved by Xavier; and that the indignation he evinced, when he liſtened to this plan, had perhaps coſt him his life. The tears guſhed from her eyes; and ſhe turned away her head, to conceal her face from the Duke, who was talking earneſtly on the deformity of the ſcheme. Her eyes fell upon the chapel and ſepulchre of the Houſe of Koningſtein. It ſtood, buried amongſt trees, almoſt upon the brink of the Elbe.—She perceived ſome perſon walking amidſt the high and thick cypreſſes which ſhaded it. The figure ſuddenly emerging; ſhe judged, from its height and black garments, that it muſt be the Lady Leopoldina. The emotions of Roſamund now ſtrove in her heart ſo violently, that fearing to betray her feelings, and thereby perhaps alſo the fatal ſecret ſhe knew; ſhe ſuddenly dried her tears: and ſtifling the tumults of her boſom, ſaid, "I ſee Madame Stahl yonder; as I am not very well, I will go to her for a little hartſhorn." As ſhe was hurrying off, the Count followed her with

affected ſolicitude: "No, my Roſamund! while this powerful nervous affection hangs over you, I will not bear you a moment out of my ſight.—Holla! Madame Stahl!" cried he in his loudeſt voice.

Leopoldina turned round; and ſeeing her friend, ſhe walked as quickly as poſſible towards them. Roſamund, diſappointed and diſmayed at the reflection of being thus a priſoner, would have ſpoken to her; but the Count ſeeing her intention, abruptly ſaid, "I beg, Stahl, that you will ſend here ſome hartſhorn and water for my niece: her ſpirits are weak; and I command that ſhe be as little diſturbed as poſſible; particularly, that none of the domeſtics ever dare to enter her apartment when ſhe is in it."—"Then am I to have the honour of waiting upon the Lady?" aſked Leopoldina with ſome anxiety. "No," ſaid he, with a ſterneſs he vainly ſought to conceal; "ſhe can wait upon herſelf."—"O my God!" cried Roſamund, in a ſuppreſſed voice, which did not eſcape the ear of the Duke, who whiſpered her, "Be not alarmed! no man ſhall injure you whilſt I live." Leopoldina now was obliged to depart; and the whole party, forgetting

getting on what account ſhe had been ſummoned, turned their ſteps towards the Caſtle.

The Counteſs met them in the hall; and dinner was on the table in leſs than an hour after. Roſamund had no appetite to eat. The hypocritical kindneſs of the Count alarmed her with a dread of ſome threatening evil, the nature of which ſhe could not define. Indeed ſhe muſt have fainted under the preſent oppreſſion on her ſpirits, had not the friendly whiſpers and looks of the Duke inſpired her with courage. Towards evening, the white clouds, which had ſwum over the face of heaven the whole day, now collected into a vaſt black maſs. A ſtrong wind poured from the weſt, ſweeping by the windows in loud and repeated howlings. "A moſt dreadful night I am afraid this will be!" ſaid the Counteſs: "the wind is ſo furious, and the air is ſo bleak, that I beg my Lord, we may have the ſtove lighted in the purple ſaloon." The Count gave the orders: and adjourning to the heated room, while they placed themſelves round a cheſs-table, the Counteſs as a ſpectator, Roſamund ſat ſilent, liſtening to the tempeſt. The trees, which ſhelved down to the river, ſeemed groaning

ing beneath the weight of the ruſhing blaſt: and the Elbe, roaring with the ſtorm, as it poured in torrents from the ſky, broke againſt the bulwarks of the Caſtle with a violence that ſhook it to its foundations. The Count and Duke ſtarted up. The Counteſs ſhrieked aloud, "The Caſtle is falling!" and fainted in the arms of her niece. Roſamund called for aſſiſtance. No one heard her; till the Duke and Blackenberg returning, told her there was no danger. When the Counteſs opened her eyes, her huſband aſſured her, that it was only the ruined tower which adhered to the ſide of the chamber they were in, which had fallen; that the water having ſapped its foundation, the ſtrength of the tempeſt had thrown it and its baſe into the river.

After much exertion on the ſide of the Count, at laſt the Counteſs became compoſed: and her huſband ordering ſupper into the room, he tried, by gaiety, to enliven the ſcene. The Duke ſought to make Roſamund cheerful: ſhe felt his kindneſs, and forced a ſmile upon her penſive features, till ſhe bade him adieu for the night. He took her hand at parting: "God bleſs you, my fair Roſamund! I fear

I fear this is no night for a repetition of the romantic ſtrains of which I am to uſurp the honour." He led her to the door. As he gave her hand the laſt preſſure, "Perhaps," whiſpered he, with an arch ſmile, "they may be the gentle ſighings of that happy Xavier, whoſe name I heard you ſo plaintively ejaculate, when the Count very rudely would have claſped you to his breaſt. Happy indeed muſt be the favoured lover of my ſweet Roſamund!" As he ſpoke, a thrill of horror ran through the veins of Roſamund. She ſtood motionleſs and ſilent. "What, am I right?" whiſpered he; "do not fear; I am your friend, and will not betray you."—O, my Lord!" cried ſhe, in a voice hardly to be heard; "you know not what you ſay!" and putting her hand to her forehead, ſhe turned out of the door, juſt as Blackenberg was leaving the ſide of his wife to ſee what detained the Duke from releaſing the hand of his niece.

Roſamund flew along the gallery, in hopes of finding the Lady Leopoldina: ſhe was met by the chief of the Counteſs's women, to whom the Count had repeated the orders which he had given in the morning. The woman,

woman, taking Roſamund by the arms, ſaid, "Excuſe me, Madam: you muſt go to your room: nothing but the ſervants' apartments lie on this ſide of the gallery; and you muſt return: the Count has commanded it ſo."—"I thank you," ſaid Roſamund; "If I muſt be confined, I do not require any attendant to my priſon: and refuſing the woman's offer to conduct her, ſhe returned to her own room. She advanced with a haughty ſtep to the toilet; and ſetting down her lamp, walked indignantly up and down the chamber, reſolving to employ that night in writing a letter to the Duke of Deux-ponts, to tell him the names of her Engliſh relatives; and to throw herſelf upon his honour and protection. The ſtorm yet raged, though not with ſuch great violence; and taking up her pen, ſhe wrote as follows:

"My Lord Duke!

"I open my heart to you with confidence, becauſe I believe, that I am addreſſing not only a Prince, but a man of honour. I am a poor, and, I had almoſt ſaid, a friendleſs girl: indeed I am friendleſs, without your Highneſs will deign to be what you have

ſo

ſo often looked and ſaid, *my friend*, my only friend! I feel myſelf in this Caſtle at the mercy of a villain; O, my Lord! did I not dread that an avowal of all I know might ſteep my conſcience in blood, I could reveal crimes that now ſtiffen me with horror: for God's ſake take me from this Caſtle, I have a grandfather, who perhaps will receive the forlorn child of his unfortunate ſon. My father was the youngeſt of Earl Petrie's very large family: he choſe the profeſſion of arms, and as his Lordſhip loved him the leaſt, he made not the ſmalleſt heſitation of ſending him to Germany as a volunteer under General Brown, who was then, as he is now, in the ſervice of the Empire. Conſtantius Petrie, my father, was not only the braveſt of men, but the beſt and the moſt amiable; he ſaw my mother, the eldeſt daughter of the Baron Clauſenburg, at the Court of Preſburg, and obtaining her affections, he married her.—The Baron, who had always intended my mother to be the wife of ſome particular Auſtrian of rank, whoſe title I have now forgotten, refuſed to ſee, or pardon her. This inexorable diſpoſition of his, I believe, dwelt deeply on her mind: ſome time after, an unkind

kind letter which her huſband received a few days prior to an expected battle, bereft her of almoſt all hope; it was from Earl Petrie, commanding his ſon to return home immediately, " for he never would acknowledge as his daughter the child of that inſolent Hungarian, who had preſumed to deſpiſe the alliance of a Britiſh Nobleman:" he ended, by ordering him, " as he dreaded his eternal curſe, to ſend backhis wife to her father, and directly to ſet out for England never again to reviſit the Continent."

" This letter afflicted his ſon, but his mental tortures were but of ſhort duration; the next day his fate was decided; my ever-lamented father, fell with many others, on the plain of Dettingen. My poor mother carried his remains to Preſburg, to be buried in the Convent in which ſhe had been educated. The journey was long and fatiguing; and two days after my father was conſigned to the cemetry of St. Thereſa, my mother died, and left me forlorn indeed.

" From that hour I remained in the Convent: the good Abbeſs foſtered me as her child; I had no wiſh to gratify, ſo happy, ſo peaceful

peaceful paſſed my days. My aunt called me from that dear home to live with her, and to be made acquainted with ſcenes which overwhelmed me to think on. I repeat again, I dare not reveal all I know: with ſuch reſerves, how can I preſume to intreat you my Lord, to take me from the roof of Count Blackenberg? if I ſtay I ſhall become diſtracted; or, perhaps, plunge the reſidue of my aunt's days in miſery. All I intreat of your goodneſs is, that your Highneſs will write to England to Earl Petrie; perhaps, when he knows that I have ſo illuſtrious a friend as the Duke of Duex-ponts, he will be compelled by ſhame, if not remorſe, to give an aſylum to the child of his neglected ſon. My Lord Duke, I apply to you as the only being on earth who will hold out his hand to ſupport a poor unhappy orphan, who ſees nothing before her but dread and danger: I fear every thing: I am made a priſoner in this Caſtle; why I am ſo, I can too eaſily gueſs, and too truly expect, that the ſame imprudent impetuoſity of feeling on my part, and a too keen penetration on the ſide of the Count, will either incur his ruin or mine own: my only remedy is to fly from this place, and to throw myſelf at once

into the arms of my paternal grandfather. O, my Lord! till I can do this, will you be my guardian? will you, as you promiſed, be indeed my protector? on you, and Heaven, only I can rely for my preſervation, from perhaps, I dare not ſay what I dread.

"If your Highneſs honour me with a few lines only, to ſay you will pardon my preſuming on your friendſhip, and promiſe to be my friend, my eternal prayers ſhall bleſs you.

"ROSAMUND PETRIE."

Roſamund read and re-read this letter: it did not pleaſe her; ſhe feared ſhe had ſpoken too plainly, that ſhe had hinted of Blackenberg having committed crimes, and that alone perhaps, little as ſhe had ſaid, might be ſufficient to criminate him, and bring him to public juſtice: to have the death of even a murderer on her head, chilled her blood, and ſhe had again taken up the pen, to write a leſs, accuſing letter, when the touching ſtrains of the ſame muſic that ſhe had heard the night before, roſe upon her ear: ſhe liſtened, and ten thouſand ſounds of the moſt Elyſian melo-

dy

dy floated through the air; now riſing in peals upon the breeze, and now ſlowly ſinking in ſuch entrancing ſoftneſs, that her ſoul melted within her. She gently roſe from her ſeat, and laid her hand upon the drapery which ſhaded the window, ſhe ſcarcely reſpired: again the air reverberated with its fulleſt notes; ſhe drew aſide the curtain, and her heart died within her. The luſtre of the moon, which now had burſt from behind the embattled clouds, ſhone full upon the water; ſhe beheld, by its clear light the figure of a beautiful youth, ſtanding in the midſt of a ſmall boat, he held a flute in his hands, from which he appeared to breathe thoſe ſounds which had ſo entranced her: his radiant hair ſtreamed like beams of light upon the breeze, and a kind of halo encircled his whole form. Roſamund felt rooted to the ſpot, and gazed upon the boat, as the waters wafted it towards her. He raiſed his eyes to Roſamund, and ſhe beheld a face whoſe lovelineſs went to her heart: irreſiſtibly ſhe bent forward; following with her eye the extended arm of this beautiful viſion, ſhe beheld that it pointed to the ſepulchre of Koningſtein: the youth then claſped his hands upon his breaſt, in an intreating at-

titude, while his imploring eyes dived deep into her ſoul. She trembled almoſt to death, for a groan, loud and long, now appeared to iſſue from amid the tombs of the chapel; and the boat, and the beautiful form before her, ſeemed to ſink beneath the waves: Roſamund ſhrieked aloud, and fell lifeleſs back upon the floor.

CHAP. VI.

" I wayle, I wepe, I ſobbe, I ſigh ful ſore
" The dedely fate, the dolefulle deſteny
" Of him that is gone, alas! without reſtore!"—

SKELTON.

" Lay not the flatt'ring unction to your ſoul
" That not your treſpaſs, but my madneſs ſpeaks."

SHAKESPEARE.

WHEN the eyes of Roſamund uncloſed ſhe found herſelf ſurrounded by people, and the rays of the morning ſun glaring full upon her face. Leopoldina ſtood by her, drowned in tears, and the Counteſs was bathing her temples with hartſhorn: ſhe drew a deep ſigh, and looking wildly around her, caught the hand of the Lady Daun, and preſſed it to her lips. " Roſamund, my dear niece," exclaimed

ed her aunt, in a voice of ſurpriſe and conſternation, "what is the matter with you? How came you thus?" Roſamund did not anſwer, but covered her face with her hands, and moaned ſo heavily, that the Counteſs threw her arms around her; "Speak, my child; has any thing happened to frighten you?"—Leopoldina dropped upon her knees, and trembling with anxiety, joined her entreaties to thoſe of the Counteſs. She made a ſign to the ſervants to quit the room: as ſoon as they were gone, Roſamund throwing her arms round the neck of Leopoldina, exclaimed in a wild voice, "I have ſeen him!"—"Seen whom?" aſked the Counteſs, "not the Duke, for he was called away before daylight this morning upon a ſummons from the Elector." The tears of Roſamund ſtreamed over her cheeks; "O, no; I do not mean him; I ſaw the murdered Count!"—"O God," cried Leopoldina, "her ſenſes are gone!"—"No, no," cried ſhe with a mournful energy, "it is too true! his was the muſic I heard, and he looked like an angel; he ſeemed to beſeech me to—do, what?" claſping her hands together, ſhe threw herſelf into the arms of Leopoldina, almoſt ſuffocated with terror. The

Counteſs ſcreamed with affright; and the Count haſtily ran into the room, with an open paper yet in his hand: "What is the matter with your Ladyſhip?" ſaid he, as he caſt a furious look on the panting Roſamund, "Is ſhe yet inſenſible?"—"My poor niece has loſt her ſenſes; ſhe is raving," cried the terrified Counteſs; "for Heaven's ſake, try to ſooth her" The Count knelt down beſide Leopoldina, who ſhuddering, drew back, as he took the hands of the agitated girl. "Roſamund," cried he, in a ſtern tone, "what is all this about? Look up this moment:" he ceaſed to ſpeak, for at the firſt ſounds of his voice ſhe had relapſed into inſenſibility. Perceiving her ſituation, he puſhed the paper which he held into his boſom, and calmly turning to his wife, aſked her what reaſons ſhe could aſſign for ſuppoſing her niece deranged. "Indeed, my Lord I cannot tell," ſaid the Counteſs, whoſe ſuperſtitious fears began to riſe; "but I now do remember, that Count Xavier was drowned, and Roſamund declares that ſhe has ſeen his ſpirit: it may be true."—"It is a lie," roared Blackenberg in a voice of fury; "the girl is abſolutely mad. May heaven blaſt her!" cried

cried he, as he traverſed the room with wild and enraged ſtrides.

Roſamund again opened her eyes; ſpringing up, ſhe wildly clung to Leopoldina, and exclaimed, "Take the murderer away, he will force me to accuſe him."—"Accuſe whom?" cried the exaſperated Count, rudely plucking her by the arm; "you wretched maniac, you dare not accuſe me!" and ſuddenly leaving his graſp, he daſhed her from him. The poor Roſamund fell againſt the iron of the ſtove, and again lay lifeleſs, with a ſtream of blood guſhing from her temple. Leopoldina ſcreamed, in terror, "monſtrous wretch!" and claſped the ſenſeleſs form in her arms. Blackenberg, in his conſternation, heard not this ejaculation; but advancing to the affrighted Counteſs, who ſtood ſhrieking in wild aſtoniſhment, "Ulrica!" cried he; "I did not intend that ſhe ſhould fall; but her wild ravings almoſt drove me to madneſs!"

As the ſervants crowded into the room, he ordered them to withdraw, and ſend immediately for a ſurgeon. He then lifted the bleeding Roſamund in his arms, and laid her upon

upon the bed. No ſigns of life appeared till the ſurgeon arrived: he, after much difficulty, brought her to herſelf, and bound up the wound in her forehead, which he hoped would be of no conſequence, as it had eſcaped the artery, within a ſtraw's breadth. Leopoldina, who ſat weeping at her head, thanked him in the moſt energetic language for this aſſurance. When Blackenberg, perceiving this unuſual eagerneſs in one who had before almoſt eſtranged herſelf from the ſight of the family, turned upon her, with his heart full of ſuſpicion, and deſired her to leave the room. "No," cried the Counteſs; "Madame Stahl appears to be loved by my niece, and I beg that ſhe may nurſe her: perhaps her converſation may ſooth theſe terrors of her brain." The Count ſtood ſilent. "I beſeech you, my Lord!" haſtily articulated Leopoldina; "I beſeech you to allow me to attend on the young Lady: her ſenſes may not quite be loſt; and people who are inſane, grow worſe by contradiction."—"Then you do think that ſhe is mad?" inquired Blackenberg, with a deep and penetrating look. Leopoldina was ſilent. "Speak!" cried he, in a ſterner accent. "Mad! yes, my Lord; her

her inmoſt ſoul is maddened."—"Well, you may ſtay," returned he; "but on no account ſuffer one of the ſervants to approach her: I will not have my houſehold infected with vain fears. That I may hear all that ſhe utters, the Counteſs and I will ſit in the next room, divided from this by the arras only. "Ulrica!" ſaid he, addreſſing his wife; "you and Stahl retire to the far window, whilſt I ſpeak a few ſoothing words to your niece."

As the Counteſs reſted on the arm of Leopoldina, to lead her away, the trembling Roſamund covered her wounded face with her hands, and moaned aloud. As ſoon as he found his obſervers were removed to a proper diſtance, he rudely, pulled her hands from her eyes, and graſping them ſtrongly by the wriſts, ſaid in a low, but dreadful voice, "You accurſed girl! you are now at my mercy. I have found the infernal letter which you intended for the Duke: and if you would yet avoid horrors that no hand but mine can prevent, never dare to breathe my name with any tale againſt me. If you do, a worſe fate than death awaits you." He turned from her, with an expreſ-

ſion

ſion of hell in his eyes; and walked out of the room, commanding the Counteſs to follow him.

Leopoldina, now at liberty to give way to her emotions, threw herſelf upon the bed beſide Roſamund; and taking her burning hands, wept violently. "My only friend!" ſaid Roſamund, in a voice hardly to be heard from weakneſs, "I am not mad: I have indeed ſeen the angelic ſpirit of Xavier: he came to entreat vengeance on his murderer!" The breath of Roſamund appeared to ſtop: ſhe reſumed, while the petrified Leopoldina fixed her anxious eyes upon her face, "Yes, Leopoldina, I ſaw him as you deſcribed him; beautiful, and in ſorrow. O his eyes! my God! my God! direct me!" and claſping her hands together, ſhe lay for a moment ſilent. The irreſolute Lady Daun gazing on her with a wild ſenſation at her heart, that almoſt drove her to frenzy, "Roſamund," ſaid ſhe, breathleſs with unbelief and dread, "are your ſweet ſenſes indeed gone? It was I—I who told you the melancholy ſtory: it is I who have done this!" In an agony of anguiſh ſhe threw herſelf upon the ground, and lay in mute deſpair. "Leopoldina!" ſaid Roſamund, in a conjuring voice,

voice, and raiſing her weakened frame upon her arm, " will you alſo deſert me? will you join with that monſter in calling me inſane? Heaven is my witneſs, what I tell you is truth. The dear angel pointed to the ſepulchre where his parents lie, as if to entreat me to accuſe the fiend who killed him—but I dare not—O, I will not!"

She dropped upon her pillow; and ſoon after the Count entered, followed by the Counteſs. He ſat down beſide her; then, with affected tenderneſs, inquired of the agitated Leopoldina, if her ſenſes were any more compoſed. Leopoldina was ſpeechleſs. And looking full at his niece, he ſaid, " Roſamund, recollect yourſelf my child; do you yet perſiſt in affirming that you have ſeen a ſpirit? Perhaps you are more reaſonable? Speak! ſaid he; and he gave her a glance that ſhe could not miſtake. " Speak this moment!" cried he. " Then," ſaid ſhe with firmneſs, " my tongue ſhall never utter a wilful falſehood. I have ſeen and heard the ſpirit of the Count Xavier; and he would prompt me——"—" To your deſtruction!" whiſpered he to her: and turning to his wife, ſaid,

ſaid, "This poor child's madneſs is ſo ſevere, that I muſt have her confined alone. Not even you can viſit her; ſhe will infect you by her fears. You and Stahl withdraw; I alone will ſuperintend her nurſes."

As he uttered this, and the Counteſs was advancing to the door, commanding the Lady Leopoldina to follow her, the terrors of Roſamund became ſo great, that in attempting to ſpring from the bed, ſhe fell to the floor, and the bandage again falling from her forehead, ſhe again was inſenſible. Leopoldina raiſed her up. "Monſter!" ſhe would have cried, but her voice failed; and ſhe could only lay the lifeleſs head of the poor ſufferer upon her boſom.

Again the ſurgeon was ſummoned, who revived her to indeed madneſs. The fever of her body, ſeized her agitated brain; and ſhe now raved with a vehemence that overwhelmed Leopoldina with agony, and drove the Counteſs weeping out of the room. The Count ſtood by in mute horror, while ſhe tore her garments, and implored, rather to be murdered than to become an accuſer. She then called aloud on the names of Koningſtein,

Xavier,

Xavier, and Sigiſmund; entreating them to ſave her from the bloody hands of their murderer. Blackenberg ſtood like a criminal before his judge. The ſurgeon was ſo alarmed at her violence, that he ordered her to be cloſely watched while he ſet off for more aſſiſtance.

The Count would not leave her a moment. He ordered the ſervants to bind her down, with cords, to her bed; then ſent every one out of the room but himſelf and Leopoldina, whom no commands nor threats could drive from the pillow of her friend. Roſamund quietly ſubmitted to have her wriſts tied; and calmly ſuffered the Lady Daun to wrap the linen fillet again round her head. She looked at the men with a wild curioſity, as they laced the bed-cloths tight over her figure. As ſoon as they had finiſhed, ſhe attempted to riſe; but finding that impracticable, her ſhrieks echoed through the whole Caſtle. She called on the Duke and Leopoldina to releaſe her; for "Blackenberg would bury her alive, with the Count whom he had murdered!" Blackenberg then ſtarted from his chair, and graſping her hand, "Roſamund!" exclaimed he; "for Heaven's ſake ceaſe theſe exclamations!

you have none but friends around you." Her only anſwer was ſtill louder cries; and more violently imploring the names of the Counts of Koningſtein. Leopoldina wrung her hands in the anguiſh of hopeleſs agony. Blackenberg, turning pale, and then red, glaring his burning eyes on his niece; and gnaſhing his teeth in the frenzy of impotent rage, ſtrode over and over the chamber in all the horrors of a guilty wretch.

The ſtruggling of the poor Roſamund with the ropes which bound her now ceaſed: their rough ſides had cut the ſoft ſurface of her wriſts; and the pain of the bleeding wounds had ſo ſickened her, that ſhe fell back, faint and exhauſted, on her pillow, Blackenberg felt a kind of ceſſation; and flinging himſelf into a chair, he reſted his head upon his arm. Roſamund ſtill remained in perfect ſilence, with her fixed eye never withdrawn from the deſpairing face of the heart-broken Leopoldina.

Already had this fearful pauſe reſted for more than an hour, when the ſurgeon and his aſſiſtant entering, the Count ſtarted up: and the

the medical men, without any difficulty, perſuaded Roſamund to ſwallow a ſtrong opiate. She ſeemed now perfectly ſtupified, and unheeding of all that paſt. The ſurgeon, turning to the Count, ſaid, that he hoped the adminiſtering of the medicine would produce a deep ſleep; and after that, the moſt ſalutary effects. Blackenberg's reſolution was formed in a moment. "I hope ſo," cried the Counteſs, with the tears yet wet upon her cheek; "I hope the dear child will recover, elſe I ſhall not only have the unhappineſs of ſeeing her ill, but be mortified by the neceſſity of putting off the fête which I have planned."— "Do not lament, my dear Ulrica!" ſaid the Count; "your poor Roſamund ſhall be removed as ſoon as ſhe is able. I will take her to the Nuns of the Holy Virgin: their convent is only twenty miles from Koningſtein: the journey is ſhort. Their care ſhall be well repaid; and, I hope, will ſoon reſtore our Roſamund again to our affection and houſe."

As moſt of this converſation was held in whiſperings at the window, the whole of it eſcaped the ear of Leopoldina, who ſtill ſat, wholly abſorbed in grief, at the bedſide of her

friend. The conſultation withdrew: and ſoon after, the weary eyelids of Roſamund cloſed in a profound ſleep. The wearied ſoul of the Lady Daun rejoiced at this; and ſhe ſat, reſting her head againſt the pillar of the canopy, with her eyes fixed upon the yet diſturbed features of the ſuffering girl. In about the lapſe of two hours, one of the female ſervants brought to her her coffee as uſual, which ſhe now drank: and ſoon after, her exhauſted frame, ſomething tranquillized by the peaceful ſlumber of her friend, ſunk down alſo to repoſe on the ſide of the bed.

The ſun now ſet. Twilight ſhaded in, and deepened into night; yet ſtill the eyes of Roſamund and her guard were ſealed in ſleep. The Count came into the chamber, followed by Freidrach, his own particular ſervant, who, by the aſſiſtance of another, bore a litter between them. The Count lifted the ſleeping girl gently in his arms, laid her on the mattraſs, and preceded the men in perfect ſtillneſs, as they bore her out of the room and down the ſtairs. The Counteſs, wrapt in her night-gown, met them in the hall, at the gate of which ſtood one of the Count's carriages.

The

The Counteſs kiſſed the inſenſible cheek of her niece, and ſaid, "Adieu, my dear Roſamund! I ſhall think of you in my fête." Then turning to the Count, "Perhaps ſhe will be recovered ere then: if ſo, you muſt tell the Abbeſs to ſend me immediate intelligence." The Count aſſured her that ſhe ſhould be taken the tendereſt care of; and aſſiſting the ſervants to lay her on the ſeat of the coach, he diſmiſſed them all, excepting Freidrach, whom he deſired to mount the horſes: ſtepping in himſelf, he ſupported her ſtill ſleeping head upon his boſom; and drawing up the windows, to exclude the night-air, they drove off as quietly as poſſible.

Their journey was not of long continuance. They ſtopped on the ſhore of the Elbe, where a boat was ready moored: once more they alighted. Blackenberg, laying her at length, in the bottom of the boat, and ſeating himſelf on her box of apparel, which the Counteſs had provided for her uſe in the convent, Freidrach rowed them until the boat approached a low archway, beneath the eaſtern wall of the Caſtle. It was ſo very low, that the Count and his ſervant were obliged to ſtoop

their bodies almoſt flat in the veſſel, while the current of the river drove it under the arch. A ſloping aſcent of ruined ſtones preſented itſelf; and an iron door, ſpoked both on the out and the inſide with long pointed ſpikes, which precluded all poſſibility of forcing.—The Count opened it with a large key, while the ſervant bore Roſamund in his arms out of the boat. Following the Count through the porch, he went on, preceded by his Lord, far under the foundations of the building, till they arrived at a ſmall portcullis, which the Count raiſing, introduced Freidrach, and his hapleſs burden, into a dungeon ſo dark, that a little grated window, through which the beams of a wan moon feebly glimmered, ſerved only to diſcover the drearineſs of the place.

The Count laid his niece upon a mattraſs, which he had cauſed to be thrown there, over a quantity of ſtraw, the better to keep out the cold. But the damp hung in thick ſlime upon the walls; and when Freidrach returned with the trunk for which his Lord had ſent; as he ſet it down he ſaid, "Surely; my Lord, this place is worſe than a common priſon! The poor

poor young Lady will die!"—"The ſooner the better," cried the Count in a ſurley tone; "elſe her life may have you broken upon the wheel. How ſhe got the information ſhe received, and plagued me with, the Devil knows! But it would not have been ſafe for my honour to allow her to remain another hour in a Caſtle where every ear ſeemed to be open to hear her. Here ſhe ſhall remain, either till Heaven takes her, or—I do not know what—exigencies muſt ſettle my determination. We will now leave her. You, Freidrach, muſt in future convey her nouriſhment, and ſet it down at the outſide of the grating of the portcullis; for never again with my will ſhall it be opened." The man ſtood irreſolute.—But Blackenberg, laying a piece of paper, written in a very large hand, upon her boſom; taking Freidrach by the arm, puſhed him out of the entrance; and locking the bolt of the portcullis, haſtened from the dungeons.

Morning beamed upon the yet uncloſed eyelids of Roſamund. Hour after hour rolled away; when Freidrach again arrived at the gate; looking in, and perceiving Roſamund

mund to be yet aſleep, he ſat down a loaf and ſome water, to which was added a portion of wine; and with a pitying heart turned away. He cloſed the outer door after him rather careleſsly, with a ſhock that reſounded through the many dreary dungeons, of which this was one. Roſamund ſtarted up at the noiſe; and gazing widley around her, could not believe her recovered ſenſes, when ſhe beheld the ſtraw on which ſhe lay, and the dripping walls of her apartment. Shuddering, and half fainting with terror, ſhe felt a ſickening hope that ſhe might yet be aſleep: ſhe rubbed her eyes, laid her hand on her heart to feel if it beat, and ſeized the paper which lay upon her boſom. By the light of the day, which ſhone dimly through the ſmall apperture, ſhe read theſe words:

"Roſamund, you have yourſelf only to blame for your impriſonment. You would perſiſt in proclaiming circumſtances, about which I commanded you to be ſilent. To ſave my honour I have confined you for life. You are wholly at my diſpoſal; and in a place where no eye nor ear can reach you.

"BLACKENBERG."

Roſamund

Roſamund droped the paper from her hand; the powers of her ſoul ſeemed to be ſuſpended. She gazed at the window, in an amazed ſtupor of intellect: "My God! a priſoner!" cried ſhe, putting her hand to her perplexed head; "a priſoner for life!" ſtill her feelings were mute; a deadly chillneſs was at her heart, and her voice returned in a dreary echo from the vaulted roof; ſhe looked wildly round, an icy coldneſs ran through her veins; ſhe ſtarted up, and with a feeble ſtep tottered towards the window; it was full fifteen feet above her head, yet ſhe perceived light through it, notwithſtanding the docks and other weeds which thruſt themſelves even in at the grating, and almoſt obſcured the few beams of the ſun: her heart heaved, when with a violent internal ſtruggle ſhe burſt into weeping, and flinging herſelf once more upon her ſtraw bed, wept till her face was deluged in tears. "I may weep," cried ſhe, "I may die of miſery, and here is no one to pity me: I am indeed entomed alive—My God! my God, protect me!" and falling on her knees, her inmoſt ſoul breathed in the ardour of her prayers.

Again

Again ſhe aroſe, and retracing her priſon, her eye caught a glimpſe of the portcullis, on the bars of which a few rays of the ſun now reſted: ſhe flew to it, gazing at the long paſſages on the other ſide, ſhe thruſt her hands through, and tried to wrench the bolt, but in vain; then in an agony of deſperation ſhe graſped the bars, ſhe ſhook them till exhauſted by fatigue, and the pain of her hands, which the ſharp iron had wounded, ſhe ſunk upon the floor, and groaned with diſappointment and miſery.

She lay there weeping and lamenting, till the evening cloſed in, and the cold blaſt blowing from the outer dungeons through the grates, ſo chilled her frame, as to compel her to riſe, and fling herſelf upon her dreary pillow. The ſtuperfaction of her mind ſoon lulled her to ſleep.

She opened not her eyes till the morning, and then the bright face of nature was changed; *the roar was up in the woods*, the winds raged, and a pelting ſhour of rain poured through the caſement. Roſamund caſt up her patient eye: "O, my God! what is to be

be my fate? To die here!" ſhe ſhuddered and ſhivering to the heart, ſhe roſe from her bed: with ſome ſurpriſe ſhe perceived her travelling trunk ſtanding near her, with a key in it; ſhe opened it; and trembling from head to foot with the cold, took from it the ſame black mantle lined with fur, in which ſhe had quitted Hungary. As ſhe threw it over her, recollection made her tears flow afreſh: it had been her mother's. "O, my mother!" exclaimed ſhe, wringing her hands, "little did you think that this would ever ſhield your poor orphan from the damps of a dungeon!"— "Madam!" ſaid a voice in a low tremulous tone. Roſamund ſtarted, and uttering a ſcream of joy, flew to the grate where ſtood Freidrach; ſhe dropped panting before him. "Madam," reſumed he, "I have brought ſome proviſions for you, and ſorry I am that I cannot of myſelf ſet you at liberty; if I were to attempt it, the Count would murder me." Roſamund could not ſpeak, ſhe only raiſed her eyes to Heaven, and mechanically took the baſket which Freidrach, with ſome difficulty, had thruſt throw the grating: "There, my Lady," continued he; "any thing that I can do to oblige you, command me."—

"Bring

"Bring me paper pen and ink," cried ſhe, and I will for ever thank you: I will write to the Duke; he will releaſe me."—"Any thing but that," returned the old man ſorrowfully; "no letter can go out here; but every thing elſe, that can make your confinement leſs hard, I will bring: I have put a book of tales for that purpoſe into the baſket beſide the bread and chicken." Roſamund thanked him for his good nature, and promiſed to comply with the earneſt entreaties which he made to her to eat, and not toſtarve herſelf, as ſeemed to be her intention, as he yet found the wine where he had left it the day before.

"And now, Madam," ſaid he ſmiling, "I have brought a note from my Lord the Count; I hope it contains good news, for he ſaid to me, when he put it into my hand, there Freidrach, that may give the fooliſh girl (pardon me Lady) her liberty; tell her to read it, and you will bring to me her verbal anſwer." Roſamund took it, ſhe opened it, but her confuſed eyes ſo dazzled the letters, that ſhe could not diſtinctly ſee one; ſhe put it into the hand of Freidrach; "Do you read it, for I cannot?"—"I cannot write, my Lady," anſwered

ſwered he; "but if you wait a few minutes, you will be more compoſed." Roſamund again took the paper, her hands trembled, and her heart fluttered with hope and fear. With ſome difficulty ſhe began as follows, her eye-ſight recovered itſelf at every ſentence.

"Roſamund! the bearer will bring back your anſwer to this ſimple queſtion, Who filled your head with the tales which have diſtracted you? It will be well for you inſtantly to reply: ſpeak the truth, and I will immediately remove you from your dungeon. You ſhall firſt take a ſolemn oath never to repeat the black falſehoods which you now believe againſt me, and I will again receive you into my houſe, and treat you with that tenderneſs due to the niece of my wife. Confeſs the name or names of thoſe wretches; and while I puniſh their crimes, you ſhall be again happy: you will have re-entered a world where yet every untaſted pleaſure awaits you. But, on the reverſe, if you continue obſtinate in declaring that a ſpirit from the dead told you theſe accurſed lies, depend upon it, the hor-

rors of your confinement ſhall be encreaſed far beyond your greateſt terrors.

"BLACKENBERG."

Roſamund threw the paper from her; breathleſs and pale with affright, ſhe ſat looking at it. "What does he ſay, my Lady? inquired the ſervant in a friendly voice; "you ſeem frightened." "I am frightened," returned ſhe, hardly able to move her parched lips; "but tell the Count Blackenberg, that my terrors ſhall never make me guilty."—"For God's ſake do not incenſe him," cried Freidrach in beſeeching accents, "he is a very tiger."—"I know it," returned Roſamund reſolutely, the blood ruſhing over her cheek, as the panic which had enveloped her faded away. Again ſhe took up the letter, and looking once more over the latter part of it, "Tell your Lord," continued ſhe in a firm voice, "that I never will purchaſe my liberty at the expence of my peace: when I anſwer his queſtion as he would have me, may Heaven abandon me! I am here," ſaid ſhe, looking around on the dripping walls of her dungeon, "and here muſt I remain till death releaſe me,"—"O, Madam!" cried Freidrach, "do not talk thus; ſuffer me

to

to tell my Lord, that you will do as he wiſhes you: you know not how cruel he can be when he is enraged; perhaps he will murder you!" The colour again faded from the cheek of Roſamund. "Ah, dear young Lady, think how horrible to die here, and nobody to bury you."—"Horrible indeed!" ſaid ſhe, with a palſied ſtart: "but there are no horrors eqaul to the crimes of his ſoul: and without I would draw down the curſes of my God; on his terms, I can never quit this dungeon. Tell him; I repeat again, that I am not afraid to die; to kill me is the extent of all that he can do, he can go no farther; and if it is to be ſo, I am reſigned: I can endure every thing, but the terrors of a guilty heart."—"And is it this that I am to ſay to my Lord?" inquired the old man: "O, ſweet young Lady, if I dared to releaſe you! but I cannot: O, it is I that am affraid to die!" His face became of an aſhy hue. "Farewell; Heaven comfort you, Madam," continued he, and with a feeble ſtep and the deepeſt moans he left the grate.

The poor Roſamund again ſat down to weep: "What are theſe horrors," thought ſhe, "that he threatens me with? Can he do worſe

than close me up in this dismal prison? I may be far from any human creature but himself and this poor wretch his servant; but he can only murder me, and for that I am prepared —perhaps, put me to some horrid tortures" She covered her face with her hands, and fell upon her knees: " O God!" cried she, in the anguish of her soul; " O God, my only friend, preserve me from these indeed horrors! Take, take me to thyself, and let me not live to perhaps steep my hand in innocent blood! O Leopoldina, where art thou?" Her tears redoubled, and she wept till the fountain of her eyes appeared dry; then, with an almost despondent heart, she crossed her hands over her bosom, and sat in silent misery. Again the second evening was approaching, before she could prevail on herself, though almost fainting for want of sustenance, to partake of the refreshments which Freidrach had brought.

Another night passed away, and nearly another day, in which the wretched Rosamund walked round and round her prison, vainly seeking to penetrate those walls which had withstood the strength of centuries. In the evening Freidrach again appeared; when, giving her

her his baſket, he told her he had brought in his pocket a lamp, with a flaſk of oil and a tinder-box. This laſt kindneſs Roſamund received with the moſt animated thanks, as the autumnal evenings were now ſhadowing in ſo faſt, that the anticipated drearineſs of ſo many hours darkneſs in ſuch a diſmal and ſolitary place, painfully augmented her miſery. As ſhe took the lamp in her hand, ſhe ſtood irreſolute; ſhe wiſhed to enquire about the Lady Leopoldina, but ſhe dared not raiſe ſuſpicion by mentioning her name. "Ah, Madam," ſaid Freidrach, miſtaking the cauſe of her look of anxiety, "my Lord is ſo employed in receiving his grand gueſts, that he has hardly time to ſpeak to one of us. When I delivered to him your Ladyſhip's meſſage, he only looked very angry, and left the room to receive ſome Ladies and Noblemen who had juſt arrived; indeed the Caſtle is quite filled with company, as my Lady Counteſs gives her gala in a day or two."—"And is this dungeon any where near the Caſtle?" inquired Roſamund. "I dare not ſay," anſwered he confuſedly, fearing that he had already ſaid too much; "my Lord forbade me, upon forfeiture of my life, to ſatisfy one of your queſtions."

Roſamund ſighed heavily with diſappointment: "Then, perhaps, you will not tell me how my aunt is in health? and how are all the poor ſervants?"—"As to that the Counteſs was never in better ſpirits; ſhe is employed from morning to night in decorating the Caſtle; the ſervants are all as well as fatigue will let them, only Madam Stahl, and ſhe has kept her bed in a low nervous fever ever ſince your Ladyſhip came away; nurſing you had quite exhauſted her, for ſhe was always delicate." "O, do tell her how I am grieved that ſhe ſhould ſuffer on my account!" the tears ſtarted from the eyes of Roſamund, as ſhe ſpoke. "Ah! young Lady," returned he, ſhaking his head, "would you have me betray my Lord? without that, I could not carry ſuch a meſſage, or indeed any meſſage from you to any one."—"Well," ſaid ſhe ſorrowfully, "I thank you for all that you have done." And turning from the grate, he quitted it, and diſappeared.

As the night cloſed in, the rains poured with redoubled violence; and going up to her bed, to wrap herſelf within its cloaths, to prevent her hearing the various noiſes occaſioned

caſioned by the ſtorm, ſhe found that the upper covering was wet through by the dripping of the water from the wall, as it ran down from the window. She now ſtood, ſickened to the heart by the drearineſs of her ſituation; knowing ſhe muſt remove her mattreſs to ſome drier ſpot, ſhe took up her tinder-box, and with ſome difficulty ſtruck a light, and lit her lamp. She ſet it down upon her trunk; and drawing her mattreſs and ſtraw to the upper end of the apartment, ſhe was preparing to get behind her trunk, to puſh it to the ſame ſpot, when ſomething ſuddenly giving way under her feet, ſhe fell from ſtep to ſtep, till ſhe found herſelf, more alarmed than bruiſed, at the bottom of a flight of ſtone ſtairs: ſhe roſe up; by the help of the faint glimmer of her lamp ſhining from the chamber above, ſhe re-aſcended the ſtairs, and ſeating herſelf upon the ſide of her bed, gazed on the trap-door, whoſe ruſted hinges ſhe had burſted.

"And are there yet deeper dungeons?" ſaid ſhe: "how much worſe had been my fate had Blackenberg confined me there, and ſo excluded me from even the comfort of the ſun!"

ſun!" Suddenly a thought ſeized her, that perhaps by theſe dungeons ſhe might find a paſſage to liberty. Catching up the lamp at the idea, ſhe wrapt her mantle cloſely around her, and darted with a quick and anxious ſtep down the ſtone ſtairs: at the bottom ſhe ſtopped: a door was before her: ſhe guarded her lamp from the wind with a corner of her robe; and while the door gave way to her hand, ſhe diſcovered a long gallery that ſeemed to have no end: but an end or an outlet ſhe was determined to find; and therefore walked on, till the obſcurity ſhe had before ſeen terminated by another flight of ſteps. Theſe were in ſuch a mutilated ſtate, that they ſhook beneath her feet as ſhe aſcended them: at the top ſhe ſaw another door, which as eaſily yielded to her hand, when ſhe found herſelf ſtanding in a dungeon more horrible than the one ſhe had left. The remains of an old rack lay upon the ground; ſeveral other implements of torture were ſcattered about, interminged with fetters reddened with ruſt; and a hundred other things to which ſhe could not aſſign a uſe. A cold damp covered her from head to foot; ſhe looked fearfully around: ſhe thought ſhe heard a low murmuring noiſe;

her

her heart ſtopt. Perhaps it was here that Blackenberg would begin thoſe horrors which he threatened! She turned about her foot to retreat; when liſtening again, it did not ſound like the whiſpering of men, but the monotonous lapſe of waters. "Surely," thought ſhe, "I muſt now be near the open air!" With a timid ſtep, affraid of meeting the Count at every motion, ſhe lightly croſſed the chamber, and entering a narrow paſſage, diſcovered the cauſe of her recent alarm and hopes to be indeed a river. She ſaw the waves daſh up againſt the ſide of the place in which ſhe ſtood; they even waſhed her feet, and ſprinkled her garments with their foam. They gained their entrance from a low arch, beneath which the pale light of the moon could hardly glimmer. She looked at it in deſpair. Nothing could go out nor enter here but a ſwimmer; and who would be mad enough to venture beneath the foundations of a building? She little thought that it was by an arch equally low with this ſhe had been brought to her priſon. Deſpondence had now poured all its poiſon into her heart: with weakened limbs ſhe ſought her way through thoſe horrid paſſages; and gaining her own dungeon, covered the broken chaſm with its door, which ſhe laid

laid lightly over it; and placed her trunk in front, to prevent all chance of Freidrach diſcovering that ſhe had even attempted to eſcape. She extinguiſhed her lamp; and, with a troubled ſpirit, ſank to ſleep.

The morning dawned: when ſhe found herſelf ſo ill from a cold that ſhe muſt have caught from the wetting of her feet the preceding evening, that in attempting to riſe, a ſwimming ſeized her head ſo powerfully, that ſhe fell back again upon her bed. Her cloaths were yet heavy with the water which had daſhed into the porch as ſhe ſtood; and ſhe now, from the extreme pain that ſhe felt all over, and the oppreſſive langour of her frame, bitterly repented having neglected to change her cloaths.—"Ah!" thought ſhe; "here I may die a lingering death, without one pitying friend to ſoothe my laſt moments: or, if I recover, I may live only to drag out exiſtence in theſe dungeons, a poor crippled wretch!"

With ſome exertion ſhe raiſed herſelf from the ground; and hardly able to move towards the trunk, ſhe took out a change of apparel, which ſhe threw over her, after having with difficulty

difficulty and pain extricated herſelf from her wet garments. She folded a large white dreſſing-gown over her clothes; and then wrapping her mantle around her, was again going to throw herſelf upon the bed, when her eye caught the paper which Blackenberg had laſt written, as it lay beſide one of the empty baſkets near her. A ſudden hope fluſhed her cheek. Taking it up, ſhe ſought for the firſt barbarous ſcrawl, which ſhe had thrown into a corner of the apartment; this ſhe ſoon found, though in her preſent weakened ſtate, with much fatigue to herſelf; ſhe ſat down, panting with wearineſs, and a flattering hope, upon the top of her trunk: ſhe enveloped the two letters round and round; in one of her gowns: this ſhe puſhed into the baſket, and bound firmly in with ſeveral folds of ribbon. When ſhe had finiſhed, ſhe looked at it; and claſping her hands together, exclaimed, "O God! here is my laſt hope! if this fails, I am indeed loſt for ever! Heaven grant that ſome benevolent creature may find it; and penetrate into the meaning of its contents." As ſhe ſpoke, ſhe roſe up; and taking her baſket in her hand, with great pain deſcended the ſtairs: at the bottom ſhe had to reſt

reſt againſt the door, as ſhe puſhed it open, to recover her breath: in a few minutes ſhe proceeded by ſupporting herſelf againſt the wall: as ſhe feebly crept along, her impatient ſoul flew before her; ſhe felt as if ſome powerful hand withheld her from advancing; and her eager eyes ſtrained their ſight to catch a view of that door which would lead her to the river, to whoſe waves ſhe ſhould conſign her baſket, and her hopes of liberty. At the foot of the ſhattered ſtairs ſhe pauſed another five minutes: ſhe attempted to walk up them, but that was impoſſible; her wearied limbs denied their office; and ſhe ſat upon the lower ſtep, mute with deſpair: ſhe looked at the baſket, then at the door of the dungeon above, with a wild feeling, as if that piece of wood was the only barrier between her and freedom.—Starting up, ſhe determined another ſtruggle ſhould decide it; and ſeizing her baſket, crept upon her hands and knees to the ſummit of the ſteps: her whole ſtrength ſhe now collected; and forcing open the door, her exhauſted frame fell on the threſhold; and her precious load ſlipping from her trembling fingers, rolled down the ſtairs to the bottom. Roſamund uttered a ſhriek of horror; and turning

turning her frantic eye from the ſight of the wiſhed for arch that ſhe had ſought, made one diſtracted plunge to regain her baſket; and flinging herſelf after it, fell from ſtep to ſtep, till ſhe ſeized her laſt hope; and then dropt back, heart-broken and lifeleſs on the earth.

CHAP. VII.

" ——— on his lips
" Sits penſive Silence, with her hallowed finger,
" Guarding the pure receſſes of his mind."

MURPHY.

IT was a heavy day when the equipage of the Vicomte de Solignac came in ſight of the Caſtle of Koningſtein. The clouds appeared almoſt to reſt on its towers; the air felt charged with vapour, and a thick drizzling ſhower blackened the landſcape. The Vicomteſſe ſuddenly ſhook off the reverie, which had for the laſt two hours enveloped them all; and turning to her Lord, ſaid, " What do you think will be our reception? I hardly remember the perſon of my ſiſter; and fourteen years reſidence with you in England have made me almoſt forget my native tongue. If Ulrica does not ſpeak French, I fear we ſhall be

a ſilent party! when we cannot underſtand each other, ſhe will not thank you, my Lord, for your ſpirit of wandering."—" Do not throw the blame on me," returned the Vicomte, laughing; " you never were any thing elſe but a Frenchwoman. You know, well that you had perfectly forgotten your German before I met you in Paris.—What do you ſay, Theodore?" ſaid he, turning to a young Chevalier who ſat near him; " you cannot recollect a ſyllable of your native language; and it was juſt the ſame with her: the Comteſſe d' Auverge carried her into France before ſhe was four years old, and yet ſhe will accuſe me of obliterating that which ſhe hardly ever knew—I pray you, Theodore, ſcold her for me!"—" If he dare," cried the gay Vicomteſſe, " I will introduce him to all the pretty girls we meet, as a downright ſtupid Engliſhman: their contempt will follow in courſe, and I ſhall glut my revenge in his wrath."—" I fear your Ladyſhip would be diſappointed," returned the Chevalier, ſmiling; " ſtupid as you term the men of England, they have always found a way to the Ladies hearts, which I could never find."—" I am glad of it," returned the Vicomteſſe, patting his cheek;

cheek; "for, I have determined that you ſhall never take up your abode in any heart but mine." The glowing eyes of Theodore turned on her with the moſt fervent eloquence: catching her white hand, before ſhe withdrew it, he preſſed it warmly to his lips, and exclaimed in a voice, whoſe very tones ſeemed enriched by the emotion that breathed them —"Dear, dear, Madam! my ſoul muſt ever love you."—"My ſweet boy!" ſaid ſhe; and while a tear of tenderneſs gliſtened in her ſmiling eye, ſhe kiſſed the hand that held hers. The Vicomte claſped her in his arms, and exclaimed, "O, Theodore! may heaven bleſs you with a treaſure ſuch as this!"—The Vicomteſſe laughed, and haſtily wiped the flowing tears from her eyes; Theodore, unable to ſpeak, preſſed the Vicomte's hand, and looked more than ten thouſand proteſtations.

The chains of the draw-bridge now rattled beneath the weight of the carriage: it entered under the portcullis, and drew up to the grand entrance. A loud uproar iſſued from within the caſtle, that but ill accorded with the ſublime ſobriety of its walls: Theodore liſtened, and looked around him, with an emotion

painful, and new to himſelf. He had caſt his eye upon the oppoſite battlements; and ſat buried in contemplation, when the voice of the Vicomteſſe from without the carriage, arouſed him.—" What, my *ſtupid Engliſh-man*, do you intend to remain there?" She held out her hand to him, and he inſtantly was at her ſide.

Several ſervants preceded them to the crimſon-ſaloon, and left them there, while they went to acquaint the Count with their arrival. Theodore gazed around him with a bewildered ſtare; and the Vicomte ſought to calm the irreſiſtible perturbation of his Alexina, who hardly knew what to expect in a ſiſter that ſhe ſcarely remembered to have ſeen. The Counteſs now flew into the room; and flinging her arms round the neck of the Vicomteſſe, received her ſuppreſſed tears into her boſom: the Counteſs ſobbed alſo: and hardly had the ſiſters regained their compoſure, when Blackenberg entered to ſalute his gueſts.—The Vicomte gave him his hand with all the warth of an honeſt heart; but when he approached the Chevalier, Theodore retreated; the horrid lines of his countenance ſtruck him with

with conſternation; and a deadly coldneſs creeping through his breaſt, he haſtily turned away, and moving to the other ſide of the chamber, he felt as if enveloped in the terrors of a horrible dream: or rather, as if labouring under one of thoſe maddening impreſſions that we ſometimes are ſenſible to, when ſet down in a new place among ſtrange people, and yet feel a kind of viſionary acquaintance with all that we ſee and hear: we argue with our diſtracted ſenſes, and almoſt believe, that we muſt have been caſed in ſome former body, and at ſome other period have been exactly in a ſimilar ſituation.

So he ſtood; looking around, gazing at the furniture, the windows, the doors, with hardly a power to withdraw his eye from one object to another. "My dear nephew," ſaid the Vicomte to him, "Come forward?"—Theodore ſtarted, and advanced to de Solignac, who, taking his hand, put it into the hand of Blackenberg. "This young man, my Lord," continued he, "is the Chevelier de Cevennes. I have the honour to be his guardian, and preſent him to you as my adopted ſon." Blackenberg bowed, and repeated

ſome compliments, the words of which Theodore hardly underſtood, being ſpoken in very bad French; but the voice ſtruck him with a ſenſation of abhorrence; and turning from him with a repugnance that he could hardly conceal, he walked up to the window.

On his left ſide, the curtain which concealed the library door, was pulled half aſide, and hung over a chair. His ſteps were arreſted, and he ſtood gazing at it with a fixed look. Croſſing his arms over his breaſt, he ſighed profoundly: almoſt terrified at the undefinable nature of his ſenſations, he tore his eye from the object, and leaned againſt the window. Twilight had caſt her mellowing ſhadow on all around, yet the darkened waters of the Elbe met his view; and alſo the long groves of cedar, willow, and cypreſs, which fringed its banks, till the white ſpires of the chapel and mauſoleum riſing above the trees, marked the horizon. He felt a cold thrill at his heart, his temples throbbed, and throwing himſelf down upon a chair, he ſupported his head upon his hand, and panted with ſickneſs.

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The Vicomteſſe, following her ſiſter and the two Lords out of the chamber, turned round to look for the Chevalier. When ſhe beheld the paleneſs of his countenance, and ſaw the langour of his attitude, ſhe haſtily flew to him, attended by the Counteſs. "My dear Theodore," cried ſhe, "are you ill? Gracious heavens, you are!"—"O, no," ſaid he, forcing a ſmile, with the confuſed blood paſſing over his cheek; "but I feel ſo ſtrange, that I almoſt think I am loſing my ſenſes."—"I hope not!" haſtily interrupted the Counteſs, while her agitated ſiſter ſtood beholding his hands in her's, and gazing on him with all the anxiety of a mother? "I hope not! elſe I ſhall believe that my Lord's Caſtle has a ſpell on it. Already I have been obliged to put one in confinement who ran mad; and, indeed, my houſekeeper, I am told is almoſt frantic."—"I entreat your Ladyſhip not to encreaſe your alarms upon my account," ſaid Theodore, riſing from his chair, and forcing a laugh, while he preſſed the hands of the Vicomteſſe to his heart: You know, my more than mother!" ſaid he to her, "that I am ſometimes an abſolute fool: Call me one this evening, and forgive the terror I have

have occaſioned you."—" I will forgive you any thing," anſwered the Vicomteſſe, with yet a look of doubt lurking in her affectionate eye, " if you will ſincerely tell me, are you ill or well?"—" I believe that I am well enough," anſwered he; " only a little whimſical: I thought a thouſand impoſſible things. But we will ſeek the Vicomte?" As he ſpoke, he took her hand, and led her from the apartment.

The Counteſs was preceding them to the breakfaſt parlour, where, becauſe of the preparations for the grand *fête*, ſupper was ordered to be ſerved; when ſhe ſtopped them in the great hall, deſiring them to obſerve the beauty of the ſcarlet damaſk, as it hung ſuſpended from the walls. She then deſcribed the intended uſe of the various decorations which lay about, and deſired the Chevalier to give her his opinion of the devices which ſhe had cauſed to be painted amidſt the wreathing round the pillars. The Vicomteſſe liſtened with affectionate politeneſs to her ſiſter; and the young Theodore unconſciouſly gazed on the figures, completely involved in

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ſcrutinizing the ſource of thoſe perplexed feelings which diſtracted him.

Various conjectures ruſhed into his mind. He looked at the Counteſs, and again arraigned himſelf of folly. The Vicomteſſe lifted up a port-crayon: "Do you draw, ſiſter?" inquired ſhe. "No," replied the Counteſs; "that belonged to my poor niece."—"Niece! what niece?" ſaid the Vicomteſſe with ſurpriſe; "The only child of Wilhelmina," anſwered the Counteſs: "though ſhe was your twin-ſiſter, I believe you ſcarcely recollect her?"—"Scarcely, indeed; I only remember that I loved her dearly." The tear trembled in the eye of the Vicomteſſe. Theodore ſtood irreſolute, whether to approach her or not. And the Counteſs looked with amaze at the ſorrow of her ſiſter. In a few minutes the Vicomteſſe recovered: "And where," continued ſhe, is the orphan-child of my poor Wilhelmina?"—"What!" ſaid the Counteſs; "did I not tell you that ſhe has loſt her ſenſes?—A few days ago ſhe was removed from hence to the Convent of the Nuns of the Holy Virgin."—"Righteous God!" exclaimed the Viſcounteſs, raiſing her hands to Heaven; "what

" what was the cauſe?"—" A fright, I believe," anſwered the Counteſs; " but let us drop the ſubject, for my Lord loved her ſo, that he cannot bear to hear her name mentioned!"—The Vicomteſſe wiped away the tears which now ſtreamed from her eyes, and reſted a few minutes upon the arm of Theodore, before ſhe could ſufficiently compoſe herſelf to enter the ſupper-room.

They placed themſelves at the table. The Count and Vicomte, were already ſet down, beſide a numerous aſſemblage of other gueſts, who alſo had taken their places round the board. The company began to partake of the various refreſhments; they drank wine, they converſed, they laughed; all ſeemed hilarity, excepting the penſive features of the now-thoughtful Vicomteſſe, and the perturbed looks of Theodore. His ſight, as it fell on every thing around, produced the ſame diſturbed emotions; all ſeemed to aſtoniſh, and to preſs upon his memory. To conceal the anxious variation of his countenance, he croſſed his knife and fork, and leaning on his elbow, ſhadowed his eyes with his hand. The Vicomteſſe obſerved him, and ſtarting up,

" Deareſt

"Deareſt Theodore," exclaimed ſhe, "I am ſure you are very ill! perhaps the fire being at your back renders you faint: do change ſeats with me." Willing to throw the blame on any thing rather than betray the ſtruggling in his mind, he aſſented to what ſhe propoſed, and went round to her chair, while ſhe took his.

Blackenberg poured out a goblet of port-wine; and handing it up the table, ſaid to the Vicomte; "I am certain, if you can perſuade the Chevalier to drink that, he will be better in a few minutes: it is only fatigue." —"Do, my dear boy," ſaid de Solignac, giving it to him. But Theodore ſmiling, put it by: "No, my Lord; you ought to know me well enough, not to be alarmed at the ſilly, nervous temperament of my body." Though he attempted to ſpeak in a gay tone, he was covered with confuſion at the redicule ſuch an effeminate and inconſiderate anſwer would draw from many of the company. He was right: moſt of the men laughed; and the ladies would have tittered, had not the grace of his perſon made a tenderer intereſt in their hearts. A clamorous medley of in-

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quiries immediately aſſailed him on every ſide from the female part of the aſſembly. Some preſented to him ſalts; others recommended to him early riſing, and a long walk juſt after ſun-riſe; to accompany him in which, each Lady very eagerly, and individually, offered her preſence. Theodore ſat vexed, looking down, and biting his under lip with anger at their impertinent forwardneſs. "Ah, Sir!" ſaid a young Lady, deeply ſighing, and rolling her languiſhing eyes upon him; the expreſſion of your features too impreſſively ſpeak the langour of your frame: my heart knows how to ſympathize with a ſoftneſs of nature, that poiſons while it enchants. A too lively ſenſibility has almoſt laid me in the tomb! and perhaps"—ſhe ſuddenly ſtopped. Theodore's eyes met thoſe of the fair Louiſe: they looked ten thouſand tender aſſeverations; and as he bowed to the implied compliment, ſhe laid her hand on her heart, and ſighed deeply. Theodore ſmiled: "Artful little devil," thought he; my affections are not to be the ſpoils of a coquette." He turned from her with an involuntary hem of contempt; and caſting his eyes upwards, his ſight was arreſted by the portrait of the princeſs Chriſtina,

as

as it hung over the Engliſh ſtove, which had been placed there by the deſire of the Counteſs. His blood ruſhed ſuddenly to his heart; and uttering a fearful groan, he fell back ſenſeleſs in his chair. The Vicomteſſe ſcreamed aloud; and flying to him, laid his head on her boſom, while her huſband ſupported her almoſt fainting form in his arms. Some of the Ladies thronged around, applying reſtoratives: the remainder were employed about the ſhrieking Louiſe, who had fallen into violent hyſterics. Theodore ſtill appeared lifeleſs; and the Vicomteſſe, in an agony of alarm, leaned her motionleſs head againſt the ſhoulder of the Vicomte. At laſt the fears of de Solignac were ſo great for his wife and his adopted ſon, that he conjured ſome one to ſend for medical aid; while he, aſſiſted by the gentlemen, laid Theodore on a ſofa. This being done, he hurried the Vicomteſſe, with ſome of the Ladies, out of the room. The yet-ſcreaming Louiſe followed them; and the Counteſs remained with the reſt, to aſſiſt in his recovery.

"Is your nephew ſubject to theſe ſwoonings," inquired a young Rhine-lander; "perhaps," added he, putting up his lip with

ſcorn; "perhaps his nerves were affected; nervous gentlemen are apt to be a little womaniſh." The ſoul of de Solignac roſe at the ſarcaſm this ſpeech meant to imply; but ſuddenly recollecting his own dignity, and viewing the Herculean height of the man who had ſpoken to him, he turned calmly away, and took the cold hand of Theodore in his: the touch ſhot like a bolt of ice to his heart: he ſnatched a bottle of ſal volatile from one of the Counteſs's women, and rubbing it plentifully over his temples, and pouring it into his breaſt, at laſt the death-like Theodore opened his eyes. He gazed around him, and ſeeing the chamber crowded with people, by the aſſiſtance of the Vicomte's arm he raiſed himſelf from the ſofa; and yet leaning on it, bowed his thanks for their attention, and advanced towards the door. The Vicomte begged that the groom of the chambers would precede them to the apartment aſſigned for the Chevalier, as he thought a night's repoſe would perfectly reſtore him.

They followed the attendant, who ſtopped at the door of the room where Roſamund uſed to ſleep. He flung it open: as they entered, de Solignac preſſed the hand of Theodore;

dore; "Good night, my dear boy; I hope to ſee you quite well in the morning."—"I do not doubt it," replied he; "pray tell the kind Vicomteſſe I ſhall be under her window before ſhe riſes." De Solignac again wiſhed him a good night, and departed.

Theodore, now left alone, ſtood in the middle of the apartment. His lamp, which the ſervant had placed on the table, caſt a pale light over the curtains of the bed; but its feeble rays not reaching the whole of the chamber, all the reſt remained in duſky obſcurity. A crowd of thoughts poured into his mind: ſtaggering to a ſeat, he dropped into it; and wringing his hands, he ſuddenly exclaimed; "O diſmal, diſmal chamber; do I again return to thee! do I return to the houſe of my father, a poor, perſecuted orphan, exiſting merely on the bounty of another!" He ſtarted up, and moved with haſty ſteps to the eaſtern window, the ſhape of which he perfectly remembered. He threw it open; the falling rain poured upon his head, but his heart was too full to mark it. He looked down: "Yes," cried he, "it was hence the murderer flung me!" He turned ſuddenly round:

"Then, O then, this muſt be the chamber in which my brother lay! I now recollect it all: in that receſs ſtood his coffin, for againſt thoſe pillars I remember to have ſtruck my head!" He flew to it: he dropped upon his knee; and lifting up his hands and fervent eyes to Heaven, exclaimed; "O God of juſtice look upon me! here, on the ſpot that held the remains of my murdered brother, I implore thee to hear me! to aſſert the rights of a miſerable orphan! My mother, my poor mother," added he, in a low murmur, "where is ſhe? Dead. She muſt be dead, for the villain is again married." He ſprang up, and traverſed the room in the wildeſt emotion.

"Fully are my undefinable feelings now accounted for. Well might my ſoul ſhrink at the ſight of the wretch who robbed me of every comfort; who would have murdered me! The ſight of thy picture, my mother!" and he raiſed his claſped hands: "that picture, which I uſed to contemplate when a child, has unveiled to me the myſtery of my emotions: O it pleads for vengeance! Yes, my God, I thank thee! I will now revenge the blood of my brother, and perhaps of my mother. But no,

no, he could have no intereſt in putting her to death; accurſed, curſed villain!" His brain burnt: he flung himſelf upon the bed, and beat his ſtruggling boſom, while his agonizing groans heaved forth the perturbation of his ſpirit. He ſtruck his hands to his forehead; then ſtayed his breath, as if his ceaſing to breathe would quiet the tempeſt in his heart: he remained almoſt motionleſs; then reſignedly raiſing his eyes to Heaven, his voice denied him utterance; but his ſoul entreated for compoſure of mind, and juſtice on Blackenberg. The awakened anguiſh of his breaſt had confuſed his head; which creating over his whole frame and thoughts a kind of chaotic ſtupor, he ſoon dropped from inſenſibility to a profound but diſordered ſleep.

The next morning was the long expected era for the *fête*. The unhappy ſon of Koningſtein roſe from his bed; and going mechanically to the window, it was yet up, as he had left it the night before; he reſted on the ſtone frame-work; and looking out, his tears rolled over his cheeks into the river. "Ah," ſighed he, "had my brother died only yeſterday, I could not be more afflicted!" He tried to diſpel the extreme of his grief, by

viewing the ſurrounding proſpect. The ſcene ſhone dimly through his watery eyes: he took out his handkerchief and dried them; and again reſuming his poſture, he gazed on the margin of the river. Day-light rendered every object diſtinct; and his arouſed recollection, by an aſſociation of ideas, which we never know till we experience, ſeemed to recognize every thing he ſaw. The towers of the caſtle, the boat-cove, the lawn, the trees, the river; the diſtant view of the mountains, which now appeared hardly emancipated from the miſt of the morning, all appeared familiar to him. "And Blackenberg is Lord here!" The idea ſhot through his frame. "O God!" cried he, turning his beſeeching eyes to the blue concave above, "thou wilt avenge the innocent!"

He wreathed his arms acroſs his breaſt, and was again falling into deep thought, when the clear accents of the Lady Louiſe ſpeaking to him from the terrace, arouſed his attention. "De Cevennes!" cried ſhe, in a ſoftened voice; "how are you?—You ſee I have ventured out notwithſtanding the violence of my fit!"—"I will attend you, Madam, in a few

few minutes," anſwered he. And turning from the window, with an oppreſſed heart, deſcended the ſtairs.

As he walked out of the north porch to join Louiſe, he found her no longer ſolitary; another Lady was on the terrace; and the dimpling ſmiles of her roſey lips were now changed to the ſevereſt pouting. When Theodore approached, and having inquired after her health, regretted his not having been told that ſhe had been ill.—" What!" ſaid ſhe, with a tone of mortified ſurpriſe; " did they not tell you, that on ſeeing you faint, I fell into the moſt agonizing hyſterics?" —The bluſh that ought to have tinged her cheek, dyed the face of Theodore.—" No indeed, Madam," returned he, " my good friends would not awaken my vanity, at the expence of your Ladyſhip's benevolence."— " Benevolence! What a ſtrange expreſſion!" ſaid ſhe, drawing a deep ſigh; and throwing her eyes down to the ground, ſhe ſilently walked by his ſide, plucking the leaves from a roſe which ſhe held in her hand, one by one, and dropping them on the graſs. Their female companion obſerved her diſappointed confuſion

confuſion with tranſport; and jumping round to the other ſide of the penſive Theodore, ſhe boldly put her arm through his, and looking archly in his face, cried in a voice of ſtifled hilarity, "Come along, de Cevennes, you and I will penetrate that wood, and leave fair Penſeroſa to her own ſad, ſad meditations?" The blood now indeed mounted into the cheeks of Louiſe; and flinging the relics of the poor roſe from her, ſhe haſtily looked up; her late tender eye darting ten thouſand furies; and exclaimed in reſentful accents, "Ducheſs Saxe Zeits, I am ſorry, that my *ſad, ſad melancholy*, ſo far tranſcends your ſorrow for the death of your huſband, that you have a heart to jeſt on the feeling. Believe me, Madam, a woman's moſt becoming ornament is her ſenſibility."—"I grant it," replied her Highneſs, laughing with rage; "when it does not diſplace her modeſty.—But when a Lady can fall into a fit at the ſight of a ſwooning Gentleman, and tell him of it afterwards, with a thouſand little artful innuendoes of love concealed, *et cetera, et cetera*. I am apt to think, that that ſenſibility deſerves another title! Name it, de Cevennes," cried ſhe, haſtily turning to him.—He was ſilent,

equally

equally diſguſted with them both.—" Come then, if you refuſe, it ſhall be nominated; I will call it—Impudence!" The inſulted Louiſe burſt into a paſſion of tears; and Theodore enraged at the unwomanly cruelty of the Ducheſs, took the hand of the ſobbing beauty, and looking ſternly at her opponent, ſaid, " I never ſufficiently knew the potency of that word, till I had the honour of liſtening to your Highneſs." He led Louiſe towards the Caſtle; while her eyes ſo danced with the rapture of this unexpected conqueſt over the illuſtrious widow, that ſhe yet covered them with her handkerchief; not to dry away her tears, for they were already diſpelled in the tranſport of her triumph, but to hide from the penetrating glance of Theodore the exulting malice of her own heart.

As Theodore, and his fair charge, entered beneath the porch, the bell rang for breakfaſt. He handed her into the parlour, when the firſt perſon he met was the Vicomteſſe.—" Good morning to you, my love," ſaid ſhe, kiſſing his cheek; " I hope you are now quite recovered."—" Quite," ſaid he, preſſing both her hands to his lips; " I told you, my dear Madam,

Madam, that I ſhould be a little ridiculous." "Not a *little* ridiculous!" cried the Vicomte, who at that moment was entering amidſt ſeveral other Noblemen; "there is a Gentleman here," and he pointed to the Rhinelander, "who has had the preſumption to obſerve that you were a great deal ſo!" Theodore turned to the young man who ſtood gazing at Louiſe, yet leaning on the arm of the Chevalier. "Stop," cried de Solignac, laying his hand on his ſhoulder; "I do not mean that you ſhould reſent the ſpeech. I only wiſh to convince this young ſoldier, that you, who would in yourſelf diſdain the headlong petulance of youth, can yet, when directed againſt your own breaſt, forgive it in another.—Sir," continued he, addreſſing the Rhinelander, before you ſo haſtily proclaim your opinion of the actions, or accidents, of any man; you would do well firſt to inveſtigate his character and conduct, leſt you ſhould ſink yourſelf to that low level into which you had raſhly ſuppoſed him to have fallen." The young man coloured, and bit his lip. "Stay, my dear Lord," cried Theodore, hurrying to interrupt him, and in pain for the confuſion of the Rhinelander, "I know not what this

Gentleman

Gentleman did ſay; but, on my part, I can hardly charge him with injuſtice. I confeſs that my indiſpoſition laſt night rendered me ridiculous in mine own eyes; and if ſo, well might it in thoſe of a ſtranger. Count Hirchfeld could not read my mind—(he ſighed bitterly,) and I forgive him." His animated eye again fell, and he held out his hand to the young Count, who haſtily graſped it, and turning to the Vicomte, ſaid, "Before this company, I acknowledge my own impertinence, and the generoſity of your nephew!" "No more of it," cried Theodore, ſqueezing his hand, "let us be friends."—"And henceforward," added the Vicomte, ſmiling, "if the comparative delicacy of the Chevalier's form wants ſuccour, let a little of your abundant ſtrength become his champion?"—"My ſword, my lord," anſwered the young "ſoldier, as my heart, ſhall always be at his ſervice."

The company now took their ſeats, and began breakfaſt. The Ducheſs came in, and threw herſelf into a chair oppoſite to Theodore. He ſat between Count Hirchfeld, his new friend, and the beautiful Louiſe, who now ranked the Chevalier de Cevennes as her confirmed

confirmed lover. A ſigh, drawn from the bottom of his ſoul, laboured in his breaſt; he ſuppreſſed it; but yet, incapable of withdrawing his fixed eyes from the touching features of Chriſtina, he ſat mute, gazing on the picture. His wild abſtracted look rivetted the attention of every one; till, forgetting that any perſon was near, he exclaimed in all the anguiſh of recollection, "O God! O God!" —and covering his face with his hand, reſted on the table. Hirchfeld ſtared with ſurpriſe. The company looked on each other: and the Vicomteſſe ſpringing up in affright, cried, "My Theodore, what ails you? This is too much to trifle with!"—"Nonſenſe!" exclaimed the mortified Ducheſs, preſſing her down again, and whiſpering ſo audibly as to be heard by all round; "do not be alarmed, my Lady; the Chevalier is only amuſing himſelf; he is trying to allure the Lady Louiſe into another hyſteric."—"What is that you ſay of my daughter?" inquired the old Counteſs of Erfurt, applying her trumpet to her ear.

Theodore had now recollected himſelf, and haſtily looking up, ſaid, turning to the Ducheſs, "I am ſorry that my having offended your

your Highneſs induces you to link the Lady Louiſe with the contempt which you would caſt upon me. The preſence of a parent, even required tenderneſs from malice. Thoſe words which your Highneſs miſconſtrued, I cannot explain to any one."—"My nephew ſhould be leſs haughty," returned the Ducheſs, turning indignantly from the Vicomte. "Indeed Theodore," ſaid de Solignac, colouring highly, "this is the firſt time in your life that you ever brought a bluſh into my face!"—"And it ſhall be the laſt," anſwered Theodore, his noble heart ſwelling his boſom: "could you, my dear Sir, read what is paſſing here!" and he preſſed his hands upon his breaſt; "but no—I confeſs that I have ſpoken irreverently to the Ducheſs, and from my ſoul I beg her pardon. I have no haughtineſs, no reſentment for any being but one;" and, unconſciouſly to himſelf, his eyes turned on Blackenberg: they ſhot through his heart like electricity; and bending his ſcowling brow on the averted face of Theodore, who feared that his look had betrayed him, he wrapped his arms together and left the chamber.

The Vicomte had taken the hand of the illuſtrious widow in his: "Will your highneſs forgive my penitent?"—"Moſt certainly," anſwered ſhe, ſmiling; and here, de Cevennes, in token of amity, ſeal it on my hand." Theodore put it reſpectfully to his lips; and Lady Louiſe darted out of the room. Hirchfeld immediately roſe and followed her; whilſt Theodore turned away to the window.

The Vicomteſſe drew near to him. The tears yet ſtood in her eyes. "My beloved boy!" ſaid ſhe, taking his hand; "what is it that diſturbs you? Theſe vague anſwers, and wild looks, what do they mean?" The lips and heart of Theodore trembled, and he looked another way. "Theodore, my own Theodore!" cried ſhe, preſſing his hand to her breaſt; "would you avoid me? Do I not love you? O, how dearly! Why deny me your confidence? Am I not your moſt affectionate friend? I would be as a mother to you." Theodore bent his head upon his boſom, and covered his guſhing tears with his other hand. She ceaſed, and almoſt ſobbed aloud; but reſolutely recovering herſelf, again ſhe

ſhe began: "Do not attempt to deceive me; I know that you are unhappy; and unhappy ſince you came to this caſtle. You have loſt your appetite: your bloom is gone: and your ſpirits! O, my Theodore, how are you changed!" She ſtopped. He ſtill held his hand to his face: but returning the preſſure of her hand, he ſaid, in an hardly articulate murmur, "Another time, and you ſhall be ſatisfied." The Vicomteſſe bowed, and turned away: and he, haſtily drawing out his handkerchief, daſhed the yet crowding tears from his eyes. At that inſtant, a loud ſwell of muſic iſſued from the grand hall. The Counteſs flew acroſs the room; and catching the arm of her ſiſter, exclaimed, in a voice of rapture, "Follow me, Ladies; the gala is arranged, and my angels have begun to ſing!"

The door was thrown open; the whole party thronged into the paſſage, and thence into the magnificent ſaloons, which were now crowded with almoſt all the noble families within the verge of the empire. The Ducheſs had ſlipped her arm through that of Theodore, and haſtened him along to view the

ſcene. All was noiſe and buſtle. The monotonous returns of ſalutation aſſailed him on every ſide: and wherever any thing ſtrange was to be diſplayed, the throng directed its current that way with an avidity that ſeemed to ſay they poſſeſſed no other ſenſes than the groſſeſt perception of ſeeing and hearing. In vain he puſhed through the varied mob; for theſe kind of aſſemblages merit no higher diſtinction. In no one face he could deſcry any traces of rationality: one fixed and vacant ſtare ſat on every countenance; and the continued, unceaſing volubility of the Ducheſs wearied his patience almoſt to give her a ſecond affront. As they croſſed the low gallery, the vaſt influx of company from the outer gate joſtled him from his companion, and carried him into the damaſked hall. He caſt up his eyes at the ſound of the ſingers, and beheld a ridiculous monument of the rage for eccentric fancies. He ſmiled at the abſurd diſpoſal of the Counteſs's deified waiting-women; and looked around for an opportunity of eſcape. Every mouth was open to extol the beauty of the arrangement; and as they made a ſmall opening to permit the entrance of the Lady of the revels, the fatigued

tigued and melancholy Theodore darted through the avenue; and croſſing the lawn, which was alſo covered with the viſitants regaling themſelves with the refreſhments, he plunged into the north wood; where throwing himſelf down, felt that there he was free to breathe and be unhappy.

CHAP. VIII.

" Thro' theſe vaults of death,
" Lonely he wanders, plunged in deep deſpair."

MURPHY.

HE leaned his head againſt the blighted trunk of an ancient pine. Its dark foliage was ſhaken from its branches, and ſtrewed the bank on which he lay. He caſt up his eyes to the dying leaves, as they fell from ſpray to ſpray, and were drifted in his face. Recollection wrung his heart. " O! thus fell the honours of my race! Thus their laſt hope withers in the winter of my fortunes!" He thought of his father, his mother, his brother! all thoſe tender names were now buried in the duſt. In this wood, under theſe trees, he remembered to have often run by

the ſide of that brother, as he uſed to wander there for hours with a book in his hand, or with his arms folded over his breaſt, and his eyes ruminating on the earth. "O, Xavier!" exclaimed he, in all the energy of retroſpection; "ſhall I never behold thee more! Are thoſe affectionate eyes cloſed for ever on thy unhappy brother?" He ſtarted up: and as grief is always impetuous, he was haſtily croſſing an open viſta in the wood, not knowing whither he was directing his ſteps, when he caught a full view of the whole aſſembly, as they danced on the lawn. The muſic came upon the breeze: it was not the ſoftening melody that the ſoul loves, but the loud and ſhrill ſtrains of merriment. The heart of Theodore ſhrunk with diſguſt from the ſcene; his thoughts were with the dead; and, to his reflective eye, there ſeemed a horror in all this mirth that petrified him: and ſighing profoundly, he turned into an oppoſite grove which led towards the Elbe.

He ſlowly walked on: every ſtep was marked with ſomething familiar; he appeared better acquainted with theſe avenues than thoſe on the other ſide of the Caſtle, becauſe here he

he uſed to wander with Xavier: he ſtopped not till he found himſelf at the porch of the chapel. "Here my brother ſleeps," he would have ſaid, but he could not utter it, his ſpeech was loſt in the ſtrength of his emotions; he laid his hand on the maſſy bolt of the gate, and puſhing it with ſome violence, in a few minutes he found himſelf in the chapel: he ruſhed over the pavement, and the next moment burſt open the black door of the ſepulchre, which contained the remains of the family of Koningſtein: he pauſed at the entrance, and gazed with a ſuſpended ſoul, at the courts beyond courts, which contained the remains of his anceſtors for many centuries. He deſcended a flight of ſteps, and ſtopped in the firſt chamber: all there was vacant; but in the ſecond, three of the catacombs were filled; the feet of the coffins were concealed beneath the arches, but the heads reſted on a monumental pedeſtal that ſtood at the entrance of each receſs.

Theodore approached them with awe.—Here were his father, his mother, his brother! He read the few words which were inſcribed on the pillar.

"*Xavierus*

" *Xavierus de Koningstein,*"

He flung his arms over the coffin: he would have ejaculated—" My brother!" but his lips only moved; his labouring boſom could emit no ſounds; he claſped his hands over his breaſt; he threw his eyes up to Heaven, his lips quivered, but yet he could not ſpeak: he tried to lift the cover, " but one view," thought he, " and I ſhall be happy;" he ſhook it gently, but it was faſt; and dropping on his knees he leaned his aching head againſt the top of the coffin, and groaned heavily. At length his ſtruggling feelings found vent; " My brother, my dear, my adored brother!" he cried, and again flung himſelf upon the body of the coffin: he fixed his parched lips to its velvet, and exclaimed in a cry of agony, " But one look at that dear face, and I ſhould die happy! my brother, my murdered brother!" His affliction now became ſo ungovernable, that falling down at the feet of the pedeſtal, his very ſoul implored Heaven to releaſe him from ſuch mental torture.

He wept, he groaned; and again raiſing himſelf, he leaned upon the head of the coffin,

ſin, his tears poured upon the velvet, "O!" cried he, lifting his claſped hands to his breaſt, with his ſtreaming eyes bent on the lid, "and is this thin bit of wood all that divides me from my brother? and dare I not tear it off?" He again laid his hand to its ſide; he pauſed a moment—was it not ſacrilege to the dead thus to diſturb the decency of their laſt reſt by violence? "O, but it is a brother's hand," cried he, "a brother's affection!" At that inſtant the little light that ſhone in at the door was darkened. He looked up and beheld a female form, dreſſed in black, ſtanding in the threſhold: as her eyes met his, ſhe tottered, and leaned againſt the column of the porch; her countenance was pale; and fearing that ſhe would fall, he haſtily ſprang towards her and ſupported her in his arms. She turned her eyes on him with a wild ſtare, and ran over his features with a diſtraction in her's that would have ſurpriſed him, had not his thoughts ſtill hovered over the coffin of Xavier.—"Madam," cried he, hardly knowing what he ſaid, "can I lead you from this place?"—"O! who are you?" cried ſhe in a voice of maddened anxiety: ſhe now clung to his arm with a ſtrength that in ſome meaſure recalled

called his ſenſes. He looked at her; his heart ſeemed to recogniſe her.—" O, ſpeak!" cried ſhe, in accents of agony; " but who can you be? No one, no one, that I would love!" and flying from him, ſhe ruſhed to the catacomb of Koningſtein, and reſted her throbbing boſom againſt it. Theodore ſtood gazing on her in mute aſtoniſhment. Again ſhe looked up, and again ſhe flew to him. " Why are you ſilent? Tell me, for God's ſake tell me," and ſhe caught both his hands; " Are you not a relation of Koningſtein's?"—" His ſon!" exclaimed he, in a voice hardly to be heard, and dropped his head upon the coffin of his brother.

Leopoldina, for it was ſhe, releaſed his hands: and after an agonizing pauſe of ſeveral minutes, when he looked up, he beheld her on her knees, with her hands and eyes lifted to Heaven, as in earneſt prayer. He gazed on her, as he would have done on a ſaint. Her long mourning robes lay upon the ground, and her white hands croſſed over her boſom, while the tears of thankſgiving poured over her pale cheek. " Who is this angel?" inquired he of himſelf, " ſhe muſt be

be the protectreſs of my infancy!" As ready as the thought he would have flown to her, but he dreaded to diſturb her prayer.

In a moment after ſhe roſe, and flying to him, claſped him to her heart. They were both ſilent, but their ſouls had ſpoken. "Madame Stahl!"—"My Sigiſmund!" at the ſame inſtant, burſt from the lips of each. She led him to the catacomb that contained the body of his father; and placing his two hands upon it, "Here," ſaid ſhe, in a ſolemn voice, and a holy enthuſiaſm radiating her eye; "here, my Sigiſmund, on theſe ſacred relics ſwear to aſſert the honour of his name, and to diſpoſſeſs the murderer of the domains of your father!"—"I do," cried he; and falling on his knees, he added, "and may the juſt and avenging God be my guide, and my confidence!"

A loud uproar now ſounded in the air, as if ſome of the *rabble rout* were directing their footſteps to this holy ſecluſion. Sigiſmund haſtily ſprang up; Leopoldina taking his hand, ſaid, "Thoſe people are approaching; if you will come with me, I will lead you in ſecrecy

ſecrecy to my apartments? you ſhall there remain in perfect ſecurity till we can fix on a plan for claiming your hereditary rights." Sigiſmund's heart was too full to reply; and putting her arm through his, ſhe hurried from the ſepulchre, rebolted its door, and led him out by a ſecret paſſage behind the altar from the chapel, into a dark avenue of trees; after haſtily traverſing the long viſtas at the extremity of the wood, they at length led them by an intricate ſweep round the outſkirts of the park, to an old neglected out-court. Leopoldina puſhed open the remnants of a door which introduced them into a cellar beneath a ſtaircaſe, whence they ſoon gained the gallery that led to her apartments.

When entered, Sigiſmund threw himſelf into a chair; the events of the morning, and the ſorrows of his infancy, hung upon his heart: he bent his head upon his arm, while the Lady Leopoldina ſat in rapt ſilence directly oppoſite to him; her eyes dwelt on every line of his figure, on every lineament of his face: his was the form of Koningſtein, juſt as ſhe had ſeen him in her youth; the ſame benign eyes that ſeemed to diſſolve her ſoul. He look-

ed

ed up; ſhe ſtretched out her hand to him: he flew to her, and dropped on his knees at her feet.—"Riſe, my beloved boy!" cried ſhe, flinging her arms around him, and weeping on his neck; "riſe, for thou art now my only comfort! and in thee a rich treaſure indeed is given! Yes, my God! I thank thee," cried ſhe, raiſing her folded hands with fervency, "I have lived to ſee the lamented ſon of my Koningſtein riſen as indeed from the tomb! O, my Sigiſmund, I had hoped to have met you in Heaven; to have ſeen you a little ſmiling cherub by the ſide of your father, your unhappy mother, and our dear Xavier! but to ſee you thus—" the rapture of her feelings denied her farther utterance; and covering her face with her hand, her heart heaved in gratitude to her Creator. Sigiſmund alſo wept; and ſeating himſelf beſide her, he took her other hand, and preſſed it fervently to his lips.

After a long pauſe, in which Leopoldina ſucceeded in calming her emotions, ſhe again turned towards him. He was gazing intently on the hand he held, and conjecturing within himſelf what could have been the nature of

Madame Stahl's connexion with his family: her manners and ſympathy almoſt aſſured him, that in her, perhaps, he ſhould find not only a friend whom he loved, but a relation to the blood of a father whom he adored. His eyes were bent down in intenſe thinking; and as his head was declined, his fair hair fell in profuſe cluſters over his poliſhed forehead, and now fluſhed cheek. The ſoul of the Lady Daun was in her eyes; this partial concealment transformed him to almoſt Xavier.—O! ſhe could have claſped him to her breaſt as that buried angel; the conviction that he was not ſo, dropped like an icicle on her heart, and ſhe laid her other hand on his.—Loſt in a train of reflections, he ſtarted at the touch; and ſhe, affectionately ſmiling, ſaid, "How you, my dear boy, were preſerved from death: and how you came within theſe domains, I am anxious to learn? Should Blackenberg chance to ſee you, which Heaven forbid; your likeneſs to your noble father and brother, would immediately betray you; and, while within the reach of ſuch a villain, what dangers would menace your life!"

"Do

"Do not fear on my account," returned Sigiſmund, "I am his gueſt."—"His gueſt!" repeated Leopoldina, looking aghaſt.——"Yes," anſwered he, "I am; and Heaven only knows the agonies which the ſight of him has coſt me! I have been in the Caſtle a very few days, but what a weight of miſery have I groaned under ſince that period!"—"In the Caſtle!—But how are you in the Caſtle?" inquired ſhe, with all the eagerneſs of alarm in her countenance; "O! who adviſed you to ſo raſh a plan? he will diſcover you; and then the meaſure of his crimes will be full! O!"—cried ſhe, ſtarting up, and wringing her hands, while ſhe walked up and down the room, "who adviſed you to come here? Some enemy to your welfare;" then ſuddenly ſtopping, "tell me," continued ſhe, "whom have you truſted with this fatal ſecret? they would deſtroy you; I am ſure they would; elſe, why fling you into the very graſp of ruin?"—She ceaſed, and a cold dew ſtood upon her forehead.—"My more than mother," cried Sigiſmund, throwing his arms around her, and drawing her to a ſeat, "for my ſake compoſe yourſelf: you have nothing to dread, the ſecret is yet within my

own breaſt; I am a gueſt of the villain, as the Chevalier de Cevennes, nephew and heir of the Vicomte de Solignac."—"How is that?" cried Leopoldina in a voice of doubt. —"By all that is holy," exclaimed Sigiſmund, reading her ſuſpicion in her face, "what I ſay is true! I would not, even to ſooth your fears, attempt to deceive you."—"I am ſatisfied," cried ſhe; "ah! little did I think that the Chevalier, in whoſe praiſes the ſervants were ſo laviſh, and my dead, my deplored Sigiſmund, were one!" She preſſed his hand to her lips: his grateful eyes beamed a return for her affection, that lay deep in his heart. Weak indeed is the power of language to pourtray thoſe feelings, in which the enraptured ſoul expands with bliſs, and almoſt ruſhes from mortality. So felt Sigiſmund.

"My beſt love," cried ſhe, the tears glittering in her eyes, "a few hours ago, and I expected to have repeated theſe ſounds, firſt in Heaven! But I am beginning again; I wiſh to be informed of every incident of your life: relate it to me; the narration may compoſe us both."

"My

"My narrative is made in a very few words," returned he: "to the protection of God, and the benevolence of the Vicomte de Solignac, I owe my preſent exiſtence. Young as I was when caſt from my home, hardly turned of ſix: yet, I clearly recollect the perſon of Xavier, and the tenderneſs he felt for me; I alſo remember every event of the cruel manner of his death; of Blackenberg's puſhing him down, as my generous brother attempted to reſcue him from the waves. Had he been left to periſh——" the blood mounted into the cheeks of Sigiſmund; his heart reproached him for the impiety of the wiſh; and in a tone of voice, lowered by the humiliation of his mind, he proceeded: "I remember Blackenberg coming into the chamber, as I watched by my brother, and his ſpeaking harſhly to me. I upbraided him with having drowned my deareſt Xavier; and he, in a fit of paſſion, caught me in his arms, and flung me out of the eaſt-window, which happened to be open. As I fell, the air ſtopped my breath from ſcreaming, and knocking my ſhoulders againſt one of the buttreſſes, I plunged ſtunned into the water: how long I lay I cannot tell, but when I recovered I found myſelf lying in the midſt of a quantity of ſtraw,

in a kind of boat, with a lad leaning over me, and rubbing me with flannels. As ſoon as I opened my eyes, he uttered a ſhout of joy, and the old man haſtily coming towards me, held a lantern to my face, and looked at me. Once having revived, I regained the power of all my ſenſes rapidly; and the poor old man having wrapped my ſhivering limbs in his warm woollen cloak, I threw myſelf down in the boat, and wept violently: I had not ſpirits to ſpeak or move, and lay there ſobbing, till the motion of the veſſel, which they now rowed briſkly on, and the natural ſtupefaction of miſery, made me ſink to ſleep.

" When I awoke, I found it broad daylight, and the boat drawing in ſhore towards a range of little huts which ſkirted the beach: the old man raiſed me in his arms, and with a deadly feeling at my heart, that no time can eraſe from my memory, I ſuffered him to carry me to land.

" Of the ſucceeding ſcenes of my infancy I have not ſo clear a recollection myſelf, as from the frequent recitals of my two friends in their

their repeated conjectures about to whom I might belong. The melancholy habits which my young mind fell into from that cruel evening, menaced me with idiotiſm. But to continue: the old fiſherman carried me into a ſmall cottage, the largeſt of the hamlet, and ſetting me down in the kitchen, gave my yet wet cloaths to a woman to dry: the noiſe which the people made while examining my poor abſtracted countenance, drew the Vicomte de Solignac and his Lady from the only other apartment the hovel contained. In the middle of the preceding night part of their travelling equipage had broken down, and ſtopping here till it was repaired; a few minutes after they were told it was in readineſs, the ſudden uproar in a place where all before had been profoundly ſtill, excited their curioſity.

" Juſt as the good woman had finiſhed covering my trembling little figure with my warmed cloaths, the Vicomteſſe came towards me: all was quiet in a moment. The ſight of a poor little creature, ſitting with its cloſed hands over its breaſt, its eyes fixed on the hot flames of a blazing fire, and an expreſſion of miſery

miſery in its face, that ſtruck directly to her heart, irreſiſtibly impelled her forwards.—Taking my hand, ſhe ſpoke to me in a language that I could not underſtand. I looked up with ſuch a penetrating ſadneſs I (repeat her own words) that ſhe could not refrain from tears: ſhe bent down and kiſſed me; I felt her tears upon my cheek; and as if by a kind of ſympathy, immediately began weeping. The Vicomte had now drawn near; he turned to his valet, who was a German, and deſired him to aſk an explanation, regarding who I was from the fiſhermen.

" After the ſervants had converſed ſome time with my honeſt preſerver, he informed his Lord that the old man ſaid, in his rowing up the river, after his uſual purſuit of fiſhing, his ſon ſaw ſomething white floating on the ſurface, and without taking time to ſpeak, drew it by his boat hook out of the water: it is needleſs to add, that it was your Sigiſmund; and that by the common means of rubbing I was reſtored to exiſtence. In vain the Vicomte ſought to learn my name; of this the fiſhermen were wholly igorant, but both agreed in ſaying, that to whom ever I belonged it was indifferent

different to them, they would cheerfully ſupport me till I was old enough to learn their buſineſs, when I ſhould provide for myſelf."

"May God bleſs them!" cried Leopoldina, raiſing her eyes to Heaven, "but O, Koningſtein, might ſuch have been the fate of thy ſon!"—"God has directed otherways!" returned Sigiſmund, "and may I never prove myſelf unworthy of his care!" He pauſed for a moment, and then continued:

"Notwithſtanding the little information which could be given of me, the Vicomteſſe declared that I muſt be the child of ſome perſon of rank; the texture of my cloaths, ſhe ſaid, was uncommonly coſtly; and there was a loftineſs in my air, which ſhe warmly contended validated her deciſion. Her Lord ſmiled at her enthuſiaſm, and aſſented to her propoſal of taking me. In a few minutes I was a little arouſed from my reverie, by being told by the valet, to dry my tears, for I ſhould live with his Lady. I roſe up as I was deſired, and giving her my hand, ſaid ſobbing, "I will go, for he is dead, and if I ſtay I ſhall be drowned!" —The Vicomteſſe underſtood part of this, and tenderly

tenderly preſſing my hand, ſaid, in good German as ſhe could recollect, "Poor child, you ſhall go with me, and I will love you."—I made no reply, but ſuffered the ſervants to lift me into the carriage; while the Vicomte took down the names of the fiſhermen, and preſented them with ſome gold.

"In the courſe of our travel, which was to Hamburg, whence we were to embark for England, my ſtupidity heavily increaſed. The Vicomteſſe tells me, that I uſed to ſit the whole day in a corner of the coach, with my eyes fixed on the carpet; my ſilence only broken by long and frequent ſighs; then ſometimes I would ſuddenly burſt into a paſſion of tears; and, wringing my little hands, ſhriek loudly the words "My brother! my brother!" After much pains on their parts, I would regain my compoſure; and perhaps drop to ſleep upon the boſom of the Vicomte. When the Vicomteſſe ſpoke to me, it was through the medium of the valet, for I could not comprehend her mutilated German. I uſed to make no direct reply to his queſtions, but keep continually repeating a diſjointed account of what ſo ſtrongly dwelt on my memory. From theſe converſations

converſations my humane protectors would always turn away diſſatisfied; as, from the agitated manner in which I delivered myſelf, they could not collect the ſmalleſt degree of what I meant.

" When the Vicomte embarked at Hamburg, and I was carried to the boat, to join my patron in the ſhip, my terror became ſo vehement at the ſight of the waves, that I clung to the ſervant, and entreated not to be drowned. I ſunk down at his feet, and implored him not to kill me there, but carry me back to be buried with my brother. The valet only laughed at my agonies; and catching me in his arms, ſtepped into the boat. My cries now became ſo exceſſive, that he puſhed his handkerchief into my mouth, to prevent my utterance. This cruelty raiſed in my boſom ſuch a paſſion of grief and rage, that I fainted away, and did not recover till we had entered the ſhip, which was now put to ſea. The Vicomteſſe ſeverely reprimanded the ſervant for his harſhneſs; and taking me into her cabin, exerted every art of tenderneſs and wounded humanity to convince me of my ſafety.

" We

" We arrived in England. The affection of the Vicomteſſe increaſed to almoſt a mother's fondneſs: in return, my love for her amounted to abſolute adoration: yet overwhelming melancholy clogged my intellects; and had it not been for the ſtimulus of gratitude, and the unwearied attention of the dear Vicomteſſe, I might at this moment have been little better than a lunatic. She taught me the French tongue, and many other trifling accompliſhments, both with the intention of rendering the communication free between us, and of gradually weaning my thoughts from the contemplation of paſt events, which ſeemed to prey upon my life.

" By the time that we had reſided twelve months in London, I had completely forgotten all my knowledge of the German; for the Vicomteſſe would never ſuffer me to converſe in that language; and indeed I had no inclination, being able to ſpeak French with the celerity of a native. Now my protectreſs would talk with me by the hours together; but in all theſe converſations ſhe could gain little of my hiſtory; only, that I was the ſon of a Count, whoſe title I could not clearly recollect,

recollect, having ſeldom heard it pronounced. My own name, I ſaid, was Sigiſmund; and alſo told her, that my mother had given me a ſecond father, whoſe title I alſo could not ſpeak; but that he drowned my brother Xavier, and had thrown me out of the window.

" This relation, both the Vicomteſſe and her huſband thought very improbable. They tried to convince me, that in a great meaſure I muſt have been deceived by falſe appearances; that ſuch uſeleſs crimes, as the death of an inoffenſive infant, were never perpetrated but by madneſs. In vain I proteſted: they as ſtrenuouſly argued againſt me; till tired with contention, I ceaſed, and never again breathed a word on the ſubject.

" The penſive abſtraction of my mind became more intenſe. Ah! how often have I looked on the young people of my own age, who were introduced to me as playfellows, and mourned, in the bitterneſs of my heart, my ſtrange deſtiny! I have looked on them, as they friſked by me, and ſaid to myſelf; You may be happy; but my father is dead, and my only brother is murdered!'

Leopoldina laid her hand on his; and graſping it fervently between her's "Yes," cried ſhe, interrupting him; "too truly did I tell the poor Roſamund that you were the *Child of ſorrow!* O little did I think that you were then alive! or even then, that ſo young a creature could have felt ſo long and ſo acutely!"—"It does appear ſtrange," returned he, deeply ſighing; "and perhaps, had I, unexperienced, heard ſuch a narrative from another, I might have diſbelieved it. But I have *felt* it all: it was the early torture of my heart that taught my head to reaſon; but I have gotten upon an unlucky ſubject; it always hurries me too much into myſelf: I will proceed with my ſtory."—"Speak what you will," cried Leopoldina, preſſing his hand to her ſtreaming eyes; "all you ſay muſt be dear to me." The eloquent look of Sigiſmund was the only reply he could make to this tender ſpeech; and after the ſilence of a moment he again began:

"The Vicomteſſe having no children of her own, nouriſhed ſuch an attachment for me, that ſhe trembled at my ſmalleſt hazard of evil. She watched my dejection; its increaſe,

creaſe, and the conſequent paleneſs of my looks, and in terror for my life, conſulted ſeveral phyſicians. They pronounced the nature of my diſorder to be wonderful in one ſo young. It depended, they ſaid, ſo completely on my depreſſed ſpirits, that nothing but an engagement of mind could be of any efficacy. Accordingly, I had the firſt maſters to inſtruct me in the different arts and ſciences; and, child as I was, the Vicomteſſe introduced me to every circle in which ſhe viſited. I was generally received as the Vicomte's nephew; and called after him, Theodore. Situated as I was, the orphan of my father, and abandoned by my mother, all names were become indifferent to me.

" Year after year wore away. As I grew into manhood, my affection for the kind, the tender Vicomteſſe amounted to ſuch a ſtrength, that her ſmalleſt wiſh exerted all the energies of my heart. She loved to ſee me gay; and in often trying to appear ſo, my attempts grew into a habit. We made the tour of Great Britain together: we viſited every thing that was beautiful and renowned; and, whether it was in wandering along the

banks of Windermere, or in traverſing the tremendous heights of Skiddaw, ſtill I found in the inexhauſtible affection of the dear Vicomteſſe my richeſt ſource of delight. She beheld with pleaſure the excluſive love I bore her; and never looked grave in my company but when I, either intentionally or by accident, ſpoke of having ſprung from other parents.

" The generous Vicomte had declared me his adopted ſon, and the ſole heir of his large poſſeſſions. His only brother was dead; at ſhame of whoſe flagrant licentiouſneſs, my good patron had quitted his own country, and taken refuge in another. But that abandoned relative being removed, he looked on me as the future repreſentative of his houſe. He treated me with the dignity of a father, and yet with the confidence of a friend. But the dear, the ineſtimable Vicomteſſe! O how ſhe would hang about me, if ever ſhe ſurpriſed me with a look of penſiveneſs on my countenance. She would kiſs my forehead, and intreat me, as I loved her; as I loved virtue, to forget thoſe who had thrown me from them.

" ' Theodore,'

" 'Theodore,' ſhe would ſay, while ſhe wound her affectionate arms around my neck, 'you are indeed my ſon. Heaven gave you to me: did not thoſe beings whom you call your parents attempt to rob you of the life they gave? They have now no rights in you: think as I do, and you are all my own.'

" In vain I would tell her that it was not my own father, but the huſband of my mother, who threw me into the waves; ſhe would combat every aſſertion; and when ſhe ſaw what ſhe ſaid had failed of convincing me, ſhe would burſt into tears.

" In ſhort, my dear Madam Stahl, in theſe two excellent beings I have met with thoſe dear characters which Heaven willed to bereave me; and can I now, that a wonderful Providence has directed me once more to the ſeat of my anceſtors, can I throw the ſlighteſt ſhade on the nice honour of my more than father, by dragging to public juſtice the guilt of one ſo nearly related to his wife? I know the faſtidious notions of the Vicomte on this ſubject; I know the tortures which he ſuffered on recollecting the merely libertine crimes of his

brother; and ſhall I, by demanding juſtice on the bloody guilt of Blackenberg, plunge his mind in miſery? The villain calls him *brother;* and my good, my confiding Vicomte has dignified him by returning the appellation; after ſuch a recognition of kindred, to reveal to him that he has exchanged hearts with a murderer; indeed I dread to do it.—A thouſand times have I been on the point of accounting for my many wild eccentricities ſince I came here, by avowing it all; but at the moment in which I have opened my lips to tell the ſtory, I have ſhrunk from the determination! I cannot take vengeance on Blackenberg, without degrading his wife, and overwhelming the almoſt ſickly honour of my beſt friend, my more than parent."

"And would you," returned Leopoldina, taking her handkerchief from her face, "would you be ſo weak as to ſuffer, out of any falſe delicacy, the murderer of your family to triumph? O, Sigiſmund! the blood of your brother calls from the grave for juſtice on his aſſaſſin! can you fear to aſſert the memory of a race, for whoſe ſake a poor weak girl incenſed this Blackenberg, and is now confined in madneſs?"——"Who is that you

ſpeak

ſpeak of?" aſked Sigiſmund in a troubled voice.

"A young creature," anſwered ſhe, "who came a dependant on this cruel houſe: ſhe is a niece of the Counteſs; but relationſhip between the poor and the rich have no ties; at leaſt Lady Blackenberg thought ſo, and the orphan Roſamund found no other ſociety in this Caſtle than her own ſorrows and mine: I told her your ſtory, and many have been the bitter tears which ſhe has wept over wrongs that ſhe could not redreſs; many have been the ſleepleſs nights which ſhe has paſſed in your fatal chamber; and moſt eloquently did ſhe accuſe Blackenberg to his face, of crimes that he had believed almoſt obliterated from the earth: her ſympathy was her deſtruction; ſhe thought on the ſad events which I had enumerated, till her ſenſes were unbraced; and then, O God, can I ever forget the ſcene! ſhe raved on your names, on the name of loſt Xavier, and every moment pierced the ear of the Count with the loudeſt accuſations of his murder."

"Where is ſhe?" aſked Sigiſmund in a tremulous voice. "In the convent of the Holy

Holy Virgin," replied Leopoldina; "when I was aſleep the Count conveyed her there, becauſe of her extreme madneſs; and," added ſhe, deeply ſighing, "I have never ſeen her ſince." —"And this," cried he, ſtarting from his ſeat, "this is the ſituation of a niece of the Vicomteſſe? O Heaven! little did I think, when the Counteſs ſo careleſsly hinted at this circumſtance, that it was my miſeries which had dethroned a reaſon ſo precious! But I will fly to her, and on my knees thank her for a pity ſo like a ſiſter's affection."—"No, no," ſaid Leopoldina, "laying her hand on his, and forcing him upon the ſofa, "be compoſed, for no attempt of that kind will be ſucceſsful: I have eſſayed it; but the Count has, under different excuſes, denied any communication, otherwiſe than by meſſages between the Convent and his houſehold. I believe the dear girl is very, very ill." She pauſed. He ſat ſilent for a few moments and then haſtily exclaimed, "But I will demand to ſee her: perhaps the ſight of one of that deplored family, may act as a ſpell upon her ſenſes?"—"No," anſwered Leopoldina mournfully; "ſuch raſh conduct, though inſufficient to reſtore her, would be quite enough to plunge your life in hazard;

hazard; your impetuoſity would alarm Blackenberg, and perhaps you might yet meet that deſtruction which he thinks is already accompliſhed: wait till you have wreſted from his hands the illegal power which he holds, and then you have my earneſt prayers to ſeek out our loved Roſamund, and to conſign the recovery of her ineſtimable mind to my care."—"I will abide by your advice," anſwered the young Count; "but how ſhall I atchieve it? What may ſhe ſuffer in the intermediate time? and, O God! ſtill my objections with regard to my ſecond father remain unſubdued."

"Sigiſmund," cried ſhe, ſtarting up, "this is puſillanimous: my ſoul deteſts the ſight of blood, but yet to rid the world of that monſter! my God! my God! to ſee the villain who robbed of exiſtence my heart's beſt love, my Xavier! O, to ſee him triumph, revelling in the very houſe of that angel, is,—is more than I can ſupport." She ſunk panting into her ſeat: Sigiſmund would have taken her hand, but ſhe ſnatched it from him. "O, no, no," exclaimed ſhe in a voice of deſpair, "leave me, you cannot be the ſon of Koningſtein, he would not fear!"—"Fear!" returned

ed he, his life-blood mounting to his face; "no, my dear Madam, God reads my heart;" and haſtily riſing from his chair, he walked the room in the moſt labouring emotions; then ſtopping, he ſuddenly caught her arm, and looking full in her face, exclaimed, "For the honour of my adored Xavier, to eſtabliſh his memory eternally in the minds of men, I would—" and haſtily turning round, he ſtruck his hand to his forehead; "Oh, I would relinquiſh this agonizing being!" He threw himſelf into a chair; Lady Leopoldina came up to him, and laying her arm on his ſhoulder, ſaid in faltering accents, "Sigiſmund, forgive me the warmth with which I upbraided you? Wretch that I am, thus to ſting the heart that is all the world to me! O, thou only remains of my dear, my adored Koningſtein," cried ſhe, ſinking at his ſide, and embracing his hand, "look on me as a poor unhappy creature, now lying at the feet of all that ſhe holds precious on earth!" She gaſped for breath; and the afflicted Sigiſmund ſuddenly flung his arms over her neck: "Riſe, riſe," cried he, and raiſed her from the ground: ſhe flung her head on the ſofa. He gazed at her a moment, then eagerly ſeizing her hands,

"My

"My heart tells me, that you have been dear to my father: perhaps it is ſome near relation of his that I am now embracing?" Leopoldina ſhook her head, and the tears guſhed over her fingers, as ſhe hid her face. Sigiſmund ſhrunk back diſappointed; he croſſed his arms, and ſat contemplating her in mute aſtoniſhment.

One conjecture followed another in rapid ſucceſſion: that her rank was far above her preſent ſituation, he did not doubt; and that ſhe bore ſome intimate kindred with himſelf he as firmly believed; but in what relation, was now the object of his thoughts: ſhe was not the relative of his father; could ſhe have borne any connection with his mother? All his conjectures were ſeverally received and refuſed; when Leopoldina, fearing that ſhe had introduced ſome unhappy ſuſpicion into his mind derogatory to her rectitude, ſuddenly collected herſelf, and lifting her head from the ſofa, ſaid, "No, I never was dear to your father: it is true, I loved him more than my peace or reputation, but *that* he never knew; and it was not until he was no

more, that I ruſhed from the protection of my family to devote myſelf to his."

Sigiſmund was ſtruck dumb with aſtoniſhment: Madam Stahl proceeded, "I ſee your ſurpriſe, but I cannot at preſent find compoſure of feelings to explain myſelf:" ſhe looked down, and for the firſt time in her life felt the horror of bearing a dubious character. Still Sigiſmund was ſilent, and ſhe ſat in painful dread of appearing in his eyes a woman of contaminated principles; the more this reflection gained upon her, the more her confuſion increaſed, till recollecting, that it was guilt only which ought to ſhrink, ſhe at once felt the energy of conſcious virtue ſwell her heart; and looking up with a ſmile of triumph in her countenance, ſtretched out her hand to him, who ſat watching the various changes of her features with a ſickening doubt in his breaſt. "I can read what is paſſing in your boſom," ſaid ſhe; "I know that I am ſuffering there; but believe me, as I ſhall anſwer to Heaven, I declare my honour is as pure as your own; to-morrow night come to my apartments, and I will give you a written hiſtory of my life; I have once repeated it, but

but I cannot again." Sigiſmund, with a ſelf-reproaching heart, fervently kiſſed the hand ſhe gave him: he felt the preſſure of ſhame and compunction upon him ſo great at the conviction of having entertained ſuch ſuſpicions of his earlieſt friend, that he knew not what to ſpeak, or how to ſit ſilent. Leopoldina obſerved his emotions with a ſecret pleaſure, and taking both his hands in hers, ſhe preſſed them to her breaſt, and ſaid, "Do not be diſtreſſed, my beloved boy; your conjectures were natural and involuntary; to convince me that you yet hold me dear, again ſuffer me to treat you as my ſon?" At theſe words he flung himſelf impetuouſly into her arms, and would have ſobbed aloud, had he not haſtily ſprung up, and to conceal his feelings, ruſhed into the gallery.

He leaned againſt the wall; after recovering his compoſure, he was again preparing to return to the room he had left, when he found his arm forcibly ſeized. He looked around, and beheld the Vicomte with Blackenberg reſting on his arm.

"And ſo we have found you at laſt," cried de Solignac; "I declare my good brother and

I have run the park and caſtle all over to find you; and at length were going to ſearch the houſekeeper's apartments."—" Ah! Chevalier," inquired Blackenberg with affected indifference; " how came you here?"—" Not in love with one of the Counteſs's waiting women, I hope?" aſked the Vicomte, laughing. Sigiſmund caught at the hint; and looking down, with an air of gaiety ſaid, " If the Count will incloſe a beautiful girl within the walls of this caſtle, hemuſt not expect to confine his gueſts from ſeeking for her. The Count turned pale.

" This will be a fine tale to tell the Vicomteſſe of her Inſenſible," ſaid de Solignac, turning to Blackenberg: " pray why was not this beauty my nephew ſpeaks of, ranked among my ſiſter's angels?" The impatience of the Count now ſwelled to almoſt rage. His paſſion purpled his cheek; but, commanding ſufficient ſerenity to direct his ſcorching eyes to Sigiſmund, while he anſwered in a tempered voice, " Becauſe ſhe was too ill to be truſted." Sigiſmund ſtarted at the unexpected ſubſtance of this reply; and his amazed eyes met thoſe of Blackenberg. A conviction immediately ſtruck the Count; and trembling

trembling all over with a dread, that the ſoreneſs of his conſcience had betrayed himſelf, he haſtily put his hand up to his forehead, which he rubbed ſeveral times backward and forward, till he had recovered from his confuſion: then looking up, his ſight encountered the ſcrutinizing eyes of the young Count; but he had recollected himſelf; and laughing aloud, with an air of the greateſt indifference, ſaid, "Come, come, Chevalier, look a little more compoſed! I know nothing about your Dulcinea; I only wiſh to frighten you a little, by way of a puniſhment for deſerting my gueſts upon the lawn." Sigiſmund ſaw an air of hypocriſy in the rapid tranſition of Blackenberg's manner; and though the cauſe was hardly definable to him, he made no reply; and felt as if he had liſtened to a falſehood.

De Solignac obſerved a ſmile of incredulity fluttering on the lips of his favourite. He laid his hand on his ſhoulder, and looking in his face, ſaid with pathetic emphaſis; "O thou myſterious boy!"—"Why myſterious?" aſked the Count, with an awakened perturbation in his own breaſt, though his countenance ſtill wore the ſemblance of eaſe: "can the Chevalier de Cevennes have any reſerves from

you?"—"I am ſure I ought not," haſtily interrupted Sigiſmund; "but all that is in my heart; yes, and all that is in the heart of another, my more than father ſhall ſoon know."—"Ah! my dear Theodore," ſaid the Vicomte, graſping his hand; "the latter confidence is more than I claim."—"You muſt receive all or none," continued Sigiſmund, with a ſmile of horror paſſing over his features; "I am commanded to carry another's crimes to my confeſſional."—"Commanded! who commanded you?" inquired the Vicomte, powerfully ſtruck by the expreſſion in the face of Theodore.—"God!" returned he, with a ſolemnity of voice and manner that thunderſtruck de Solignac, and made Blackenberg ſhudder to the centre of his ſoul.

A deep ſilence now enſued: and with the Count leaning ſullenly on the arm of de Solignac, they haſtened their ſteps, and walked towards the ſaloons.

END OF FIRST VOLUME.

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